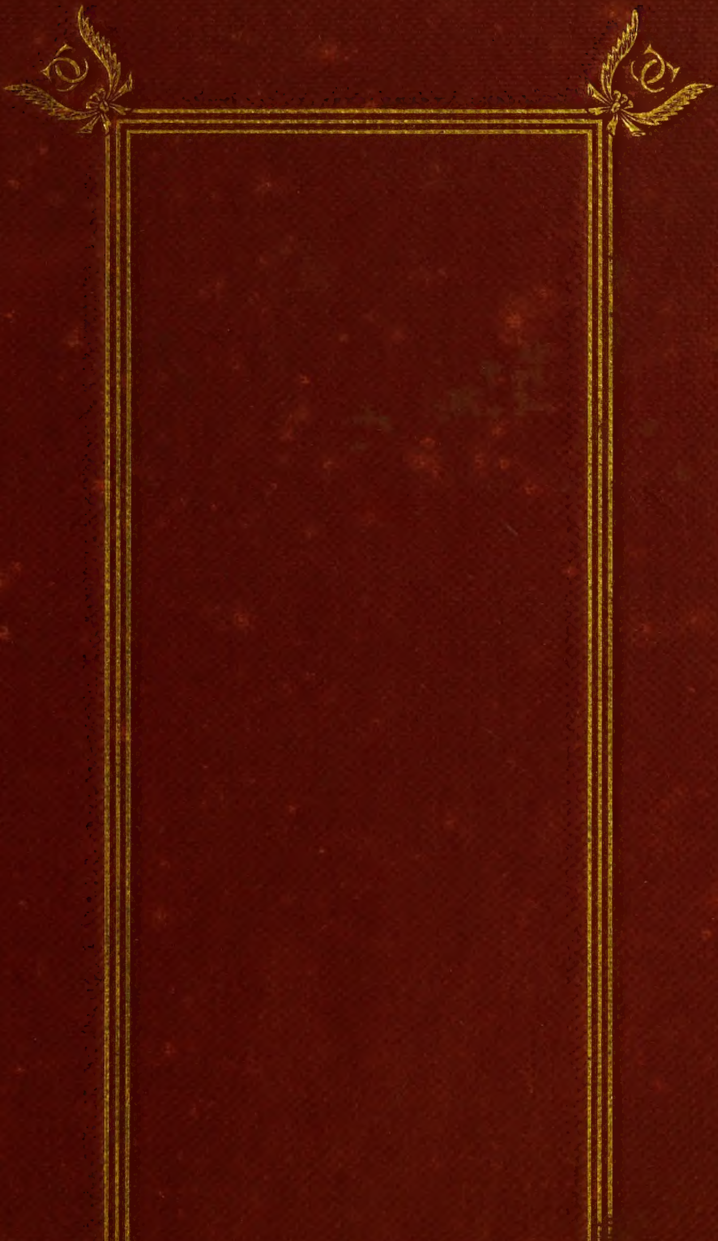

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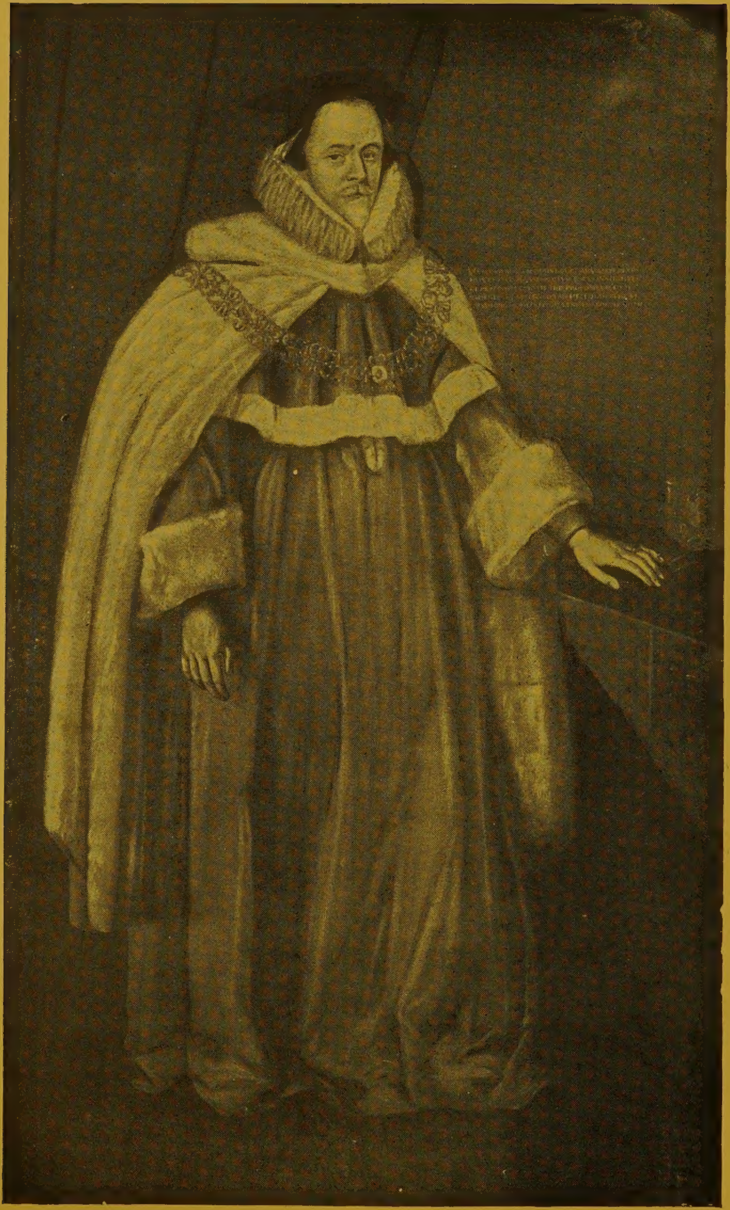
CHIEF JUSTICE COKE
HIS FAMILY AND DESCENDANTS AT HOLKHAM



CHIEF JUSTICE COKE (1552-1634), BY PAUL VAN SOMER
Given to the Inner Temple by Mrs. Anne Sadleir.
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CHIEF JUSTICE COKE
HIS FAMILY & DESCENDANTS AT HOLKHAM

By

CHARLES WARBURTON JAMES, M.A.

Sometime Librarian
at HOLKHAM

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TO

THE HONOURABLE

THOMAS WILLIAM EDWARD COKE
(1908 . . .)
ENSIGN AND SECOND LIEUTENANT OF HIS MAJESTY'S SCOTS GUARDS

TWELFTH IN DESCENT FROM CHIEF JUSTICE COKE

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED

IN THE CONFIDENT HOPE THAT HE WILL EMULATE THE
VIRTUES OF HIS ANCESTORS, AVOID THEIR MISTAKES,
AND NEVER CEASE TO GIVE TO HOLKHAM THE LOVE
AND HOMAGE IT DESERVES

PREFACE

SINCE Thomas Fuller gave his brief account of Chief Justice Coke in "The Worthies of England" (1662), the author of the article in "Biographica Britannia," Serjeant Woolrych, Mr. Cuthbert Johnson, and Lord Campbell have published what they thought they knew about him. The "Dictionary of National Biography" spares him several pages, and, quite recently, Lord Birkenhead has sketched his career. Mr. Carthew's invaluable "Hundred of Launditch" contains much curious information about him, and Roger Coke's "Detection" has some entertaining memoranda about his father and his more distinguished grandfather.

I have consulted these authorities, as well as many MS. documents concerned with the Chief Justice and his family—the majority of them unpublished—which remain at Holkham, the British Museum, the Bodleian, at Trinity College, Cambridge, and at Heveningham Hall.

I do not pretend to give more than a short sketch of the great man as lawyer and statesman, but I hope that in what I have set down about his private life there may be found something novel and interesting.

Papers now at Holkham are chiefly responsible for the sketches of Sir Edward Coke's posterity, but the great libraries mentioned above have also contributed to my knowledge of these less-renowned personages.

I hope that the long story of the life of Thomas Coke, Lord Lovell, and first Earl of Leicester of the Coke family, the creator of modern Holkham, will not be found too long, or wearisome in its detail.

Surely he was a remarkable man, and has well earned a high place among the *virtuosi* and builders of the earlier eighteenth century, some of whom have received more, but not better deserved, recognition. Too many visitors to Holkham are under the amazingly wrong impression that the great house, the park, and the flourishing agriculture were solely the work of his great-nephew, Thomas William, so generally spoken of as "Coke of Norfolk." That popular and, indeed, eminent man inherited Holkham—he did not create it.

My thanks are due, firstly, to Lord Leicester for the permission he gave me of unreserved access to his muniments, and to Lady Leicester for her unvarying encouragement in my pleasant task of research therein. Then, for permission to use letters and other documents in their possession, they are due to the Duke of Devonshire, Lord and Lady Huntingfield, Lord Dartmouth, Lord Spencer, Lord Falmouth, Mrs. Adlercron, and to Trinity College, Cambridge, also to Lady Crutchley, Dow. Lady Jersey, Dr. Paget Toynbee, Rev. T. H. Park, Viscountess Harcourt, Hon. J. St. V. Saumarez, Canon Foster of Lincoln, Col. Francis Meynell, the Provost of Eton, and to my cousins Mr. Ashton and Mr. Rutson James. To Lady Newton I owe grateful thanks for much help and sympathy; to Mabel Lady Airlie, for excellent advice; to Mrs. Fritz Williamson, to Sir Henry Miers, to Mr. W. Villiers Cooper, to my cousin, Mr. Philip Chesney Yorke, for valuable criticism; also to Dr. Craster of the Bodleian, and to Mr. Cox and Mr. Manwaring of the London Library, for their frequent and most valuable help. Alas that Mr. Woods, late head of the MS. Reading Room at the British Museum, is no longer here to receive my warmest thanks for his untiring kindness to me.

C. W. JAMES.

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The design for the cover of this book is adapted from a binding done for Charles II., of which several specimens are at Holkham.

" 'No hay libro tan malo,' dixo el Bachiller, 'que no tenga algo bueno.' 'No hay duda en eso,' replicò Don Quixote."—Cervantes.

" 'There is no book so bad,' said the Batchelour, 'but some good thing may be found in it.' 'There is no doubt of that,' replied Don Quixote."

Don Quixote, Motteux's translation.

* * * * *

"I adopted the tolerating maxim of the elder Pliny, 'nullum esse librum tam malum ut non ex aliquâ parte prodesset.' "—Gibbon.

CHAPTER I

EDWARD COKE—THE FIRST FORTY YEARS

"Call forth your gossips by-and-by—
Elinor, Joan, and Margery,
Margaret, Alice, and Cecily,
For they will come both all and some."

IN January, 1551-52, the gossips of the village of Mileham in Norfolk were looking forward to a summons from young Mrs. Robert Coke, who was expecting soon to "go upstairs," as the East Anglian euphemism has it, and present her husband with a living pledge of her affection. But there was to be no "upstairs" this time, and the gossips lost their chance. For on February 1, as Mrs. Coke sat by the fireside in her parlour, musing, very likely, on the coming event, and hoping "it" would be a boy, suddenly her thoughts were interrupted by the bold leaping of a man-child on to the hearthstone. There was no time to get her to bed and call the gossips; the event was over before Mrs. Gamp had arrived with her wonted cry of "Bless the babe and save the mother."

Mrs. Coke was saved to bring forth several more children, and the babe was blessed to become the celebrated Sir Edward Coke, Lord Chief Justice of England, brightest, perhaps, among all the Law's shining lights, and, what is better still, one of the stoutest defenders of the rights of the people against the encroachments of an arbitrary King. It was clear to the gossips, and everyone else, that a boy so bold in the manner of his birth was destined to greatness. Eventually he was told the story of his early exploit, and he himself showed the hearthstone to his friend and Norfolk neighbour, Sir Henry Spelman, who has recorded the fact for our benefit in his "Icenia."

This brave boy's father, Robert Coke, a London barrister, came of a well-established Norfolk family. The mother whom he so startled was Winifred Knightley, born of the very ancient and honourable house of Knightley of Fawsley.

It has been suggested by an antiquary of some reputation that Mrs. Coke was not, in truth, a scion of the House of Fawsley. But Sir William Camden was satisfied that her father, William Knightley, descended lineally from the second son of Sir Richard of Fawsley, and his wife Helena, daughter and heir of Nicholas Chanceys. Our suspicious antiquary did not know this, perhaps. Nor had he seen a beautiful MS. Psalter now at Holkham, which, though it does not afford proof, tends to confirm the claim of Winifred's family to be of the true Knightley stock. It bears within its pages a pedigree of ownership, written about the middle of the sixteenth century:

> "It was first given by the Duke of Buckingham to
> Syr Rycharde Knyghtley the Father
> Syr Rycharde Knyghtley the Son
> of Fallesley in Northampton Shire."[1]

and so became the property of succeeding Knightleys, until at last it came into the hands of Sir Edward Coke, who has added that he, the "nephew of George Knightley," was now its possessor.

Robert Coke and Winifred Knightley were married at Norwich in 1543. They had ten children, of whom all were girls except Edward, and Robert, baptised 1559, who died young. The sensible mother gave all her daughters pretty names: they were Etheldreda, Ursula, Elizabeth, Margaret, Winifred, Dorothy and Anna, and are given in that order by Camden, but he omitted little Bridget, who died in 1559, six years old. Camden's order is not to be trusted, for he names Robert second of the family, and puts Edward last. Nor do the inscriptions on the tombs of the parents help us. For on Robert Coke's tomb in St. Andrew's, Holborn (he was of Lincoln's Inn), erected many years after his death by his famous son, Edward has named himself first, and his sisters in a slightly different order from that which appears on Winifred's tomb in Tittleshall Church. Perhaps the stonemasons' carvers altered the order of names for some convenience of spacing, or perhaps they were merely stupid. He of Tittleshall has carved Awdry (short for Etheldreda) as Andrew. The point is not important, except that we should like to know if Edward were the firstborn. I think he was not. For although a jury of matrons informs me that ten children could have been borne by Winifred, between February 1, 1551-52, and November, 1561 (the dates of Edward's birth and his father's death), they do not think it likely that a lady should have no children for eight years, and then produce ten in ten years.

---

[1] At the end of the book Doctor Knightley has written that he lent it to Dame Beñet Burton, anchores, of Pollesworth, desiring her to remember in her prayer Dame Jane Knightley who gave him the book. When Henry VIII.'s Commissioners went to Pollesworth, they found "an anchores of a very religious sort, one close upon a hundred years old"; and in the Augmentation Records we find that Benedicta Burton was sent out into the world with a pension of forty shillings.

The girls were all either beautiful or charming, unless, indeed, it was that their mother was a mistress-matchmaker, for they all married, and most of their husbands were of distinguished name: Knyvett, Bohun, Osborne, Mingay, Franklyn. When brother Edward had become a rich man, he was good to his sisters, I feel sure. I know that he gave Awdry Bohun's daughter Meriel a hundred pounds towards her dowry. Anna married one Francis Stubbe of Scottow, and her brother gave her son Edmund the living of Huntingfield in 1621, and her descendants were recognised as cousins a hundred years after her marriage. Margaret Coke married one Robert Barker, who was made a serjeant-at-law in 1603. Mr. Chamberlain wrote of him to Mr. Dudley Carleton: ". . . Barker, for whose preferment the world finds no other reason but that he is Mr. Atturney's brother-in-law, or els (as one saide) that among so many biters there should be one barker."

In 1563, two years after Robert Coke's death, his widow made another visit to Mileham Church, not, as usual, to have a daughter christened, but to be married again. This time, Mr. Robert Bozun, another sprout from an old Norfolk tree, was the happy man. A bold man, maybe, to take a widow with eight children, but it is not unlikely that the Widow Coke was "well left."

Her husband had been successful in his profession, and he owned property at Mileham and at Happisburgh, in Norfolk, and he owned the parsonage of Whytwelle near Reepham. Lord Campbell, in his Life of Coke, asserts that Winifred had brought him Mileham as her dower, but this is not true. Robert Coke bought the Manor of Burghwood, in Mileham, from one George Townsend, and he possessed no other property there.

But whether it were Widow Winifred's charms or her substance that attracted Mr. Bozun, he married her ; and she, perhaps, reflected that in marrying another Robert she would not have to accustom her tongue to a new Christian name. In six years, however, he was a widower. Winifred died in 1569, and was buried, not at Mileham, but in the neighbouring church of Tittleshall, which was thereafter honoured by the dust of her illustrious son, and that of many succeeding Cokes, until the family dormitory was closed, and the late Lord Leicester was buried at Holkham. I think that Edward revered the memory of his mother, for in an old law book which bears her name, "Wenefred Coke, widow," he has written, "Scripta manu propria Matris" ("Written by my Mother's own hand").

Of Edward Coke's childhood not much is known. One boy, probably a bright forward boy, among eight sisters, would run a risk, in these days, of being spoiled. But in that sterner age, little boys were generally sent away to some tutor; and when Edward's mother married again, he went to the fine old Grammar School at Norwich, of which he remained the most famous pupil, until Admiral Lord Nelson conferred further lustre upon it. A pleasant memorial of his schooldays has survived at Holkham in the shape of his well-used copy of Horace, an octavo of the fine French edition of H. Stephen. He had studied the "Odes" and the "Satires," making numerous notes in a neat, incredibly small script.

In 1567, aged sixteen, he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, which he left, says Lord Campbell, without taking a degree. Yet he himself, in a paper entitled "Degrees, Proceedings and Deliveries of Sir Edward Coke," which he annotated with his own hand for the benefit of his posterity, and which is now at Holkham, he himself records that he was at "Trinity College, Camb., and afterwards proceeded Master of Arts." There is no doubt that he loved his Alma Mater as she deserves to be loved, and she was not unmindful of him. There is a copy at Holkham of the "Polyanthea" (Lyons, 1600), in which he has written, "Edw. Coke, ex dono veteris Academiæ Camtabr " (" The gift of my old University of Cambridge "), and in his record of his proceedings and degrees he has noted among " his offices, besides those before remembered," that he was " High Steward of the University of Cambridge with Thos. Earl of Suffolk, and Governour of the possessions of Tr. Colledge in Camb. under theire cōmon seale."

His portrait hangs in the Hall at Trinity, and nearly two hundred years after he matriculated there, that august seminary invited his descendant, Sir Thomas Coke, first Earl of Leicester, to present their library with a bust of his famous ancestor, " by our Sculptor, Mr. Roubiliac," and this bust may be seen there to this day.

Leaving Cambridge in 1571, Edward Coke was admitted at Clifford's Inn, to start upon his legal career. Lord Campbell thought he might have " resided in his country mansion, kept hounds and hawks," and so forth, but " being imbued with ambition and a grasping love of riches," he resolved to follow the Law.

This is nonsense. Was a boy who had exhibited such determination at his birth to settle down as a small squireen in a remote village? We do not know that he had a house of his own, for the rents of Mileham would perhaps be appropriated to the maintenance of his seven sisters. If everybody who makes a large fortune at the Bar is to be accused of having " a grasping love of riches " when he was a boy, then avarice must be a commoner complaint among the young than we believe it is. Lord Campbell had no evidence to support such a charge. Indeed, a tradition that Edward Coke began life with no silver spoon in his mouth lingered till 1784, in which year a Mrs. Walsingham showed Mrs. Delany " a ring which was Chief Justice Coke's, 3 rose diamonds set straight, the motto in the inside, ' O Prepare.' This ring, a horse, ten pounds, and a rapier being all he set out in life with." The truth about him probably lies midway between Lord Campbell with his hawks and hounds, and Mrs. Walsingham with her ring. At any rate, he was able to support himself for several years before he began to make money. Indeed, he laid the foundation of his vast landed property two years before he was called to the Bar, paying five pounds for a messuage with ten acres adjoining, in the parish of Tittleshall. To a copy of the deed of sale he has added in his beautiful script the words, "And this was the first purchase of land that the said Edward Coke made."

All authorities agree that the young man "scorned delights, and lived laborious days," reading hard, and discussing difficult questions at the "Moots," those after-dinner meetings for the cracking of legal nuts which were revived at the Inner Temple in January, 1926, after 200 years of neglect. The Inner Temple authorities were so much impressed with the ability shown by the student, that he was called to the Bar in 1578, earlier than was customary, after only six years' study.

The Catalogue of landmarks in his life from which I shall quote was drawn up when he was a very old man, but some of the notes he has added to it (not all) are in a handwriting worthy of his youth, and his memory as to the great day of calling had not failed, for he could remember that he was called "by Bromeley, solicitor, and others of the bench, with Tho. Coventry, Laur. Tanfield, Geo. Croke the father, and Mr. [Master of the] Temple." Next year, 1579, he was "Chosen Reader of Lyons Inne, and reade there uppon the statute de modo levandi finis, and continued Reader there neere three years. Mr. Alington being Treasurer." In another place he has noted his first brief, in the King's Bench, and his successful advocacy. It was in the same year, 1579. The story has often been told. Here is Lord Campbell's version:

> "Lord Cromwell . . . had become leader of the Puritans, and wished to abolish all Liturgies. He accordingly introduced into his parish Church, North Elmham, in Norfolk, where he expected to meet no opposition, two unlicensed preachers of the Genevese school who denounced the Book of Common Prayer as impious and superstitious. The Reverend Mr. Denny, the Vicar, remonstrating, Lord Cromwell said, 'Thou art a false varlet, and I like not of thee.' Upon which the Vicar retorted, 'It is no marvel that you like not of me, for you like of men who maintain sedition against the Queen's proceedings.' For these words, Lord Cromwell brought an action against the Vicar: and the *éclat* with which young Edward Coke had just been called to the Bar having reached his own county, he was retained as Counsel for the Defendant. . . . After a very learned argument, he obtained the judgment of the Court in his favour."

Twenty years after this first encounter with Lord Cromwell, when that eminent Puritan nobleman had come to complete financial ruin, he has become Mr. Coke's humble servant, and Mr. Coke has bought his property at North Elmham, paying £6,200 for it in 1598. A few years later, Lord Cromwell directs a letter to his "especial good friend, Edward Coke, Esq.," begging his help, and acknowledging himself "much bound unto you for yor redyness to pleasure me in theise tymes of my troubles." Thus were the tables turned.

Then there was a celebrated "Shelley Case," and I am told that all lawyers, even at this day, should know it by heart, for it concerns "real property," and Edward Coke's arguments have never yet been impugned. His copy of "A Reporte of the Judgment and part of the Arguments" with his notes thereon is at Holkham now. It is one of many manuscripts which show that no man could write a more beautiful and legible hand when he chose, or a more detestable when he merely scribbled.

After his success in Shelley's Case he never looked back, but seems to have been employed in every important case that came before the Courts at Westminster. Needless to say he earned a good income which increased year by year; and being naturally of a frugal mind as regards his own pleasures, neither drinking, roystering, gambling, or keeping a yacht, he could "put by" many good round sums. He had been called to the Bar but two years when he could lay out £3,600 in the purchase of the estate of Godwick adjoining the parish of Tittleshall where he had first become a landowner. Here he built himself a house. It is only a few miles from his first home at Mileham.

From henceforth his investments in land[1] go on with almost monotonous regularity. And his record of advancement in place and reputation keeps pace with his record as a landowner. In 1586, this barrister of six years' practice is made Recorder of Norwich, "Alderman Pecke being Maior." An excellent portrait of their young Recorder still hangs in Norwich Guildhall. The same year he is made Justice of the Peace for Norfolk, "per Thomas Bromeley, Cancell." Three years later he becomes an M.P. This important event had been omitted in the fair copy of his "Degrees and Proceed-

[1] See Appendix II.

ings," but he supplies the information in a small, desperate scribble:

> " In the parlment of an. 31 Eliza. one of the burgesses of Aldborough in Suffolk."

This is a step in Edward Coke's career which escaped the notice of his early biographers Serjeant Woolrych and Cuthbert Johnson, who chronicle no election to Parliament before 1592. In 1590 he was made a Bencher of the Inner Temple, and in 1592 honours fell thick upon him:

> " Jan. 1592. 34 Eliza. Recorder of the cittie of London, Sr. Wm. Webbe, Lord maior.
>
> Pasch. Term 1592, Chosen Reader of the Temple.
>
> 11 Junii 1592 Solicitor Generall by lres [letters] patent.
>
> 2 Aug, 1592. Reader in the Inner Temple uppon the Satute 27 H. 8 of Uses, and made seaven readings.[1]
>
> 28 Jan. 1592 35 Eliza. Nominated to be Speaker of the Parlament at hampton court by Queen Elizabeth and the Lords of the Counsell.
>
> 5 Feb. eodem anno. Chosen Knight of the Countie of Norff. in the first place, with Nath. Bacon, arm.—for the plment holden 35 Eliza.
>
> 19 Feb. eodem anno. Chosen Speaker of the plment of the house of Cōmons in pliament.
>
> 22 Apr. 1593, Attorney Generall to Queene Elizabeth by lres. patent."

If any of the Mileham gossips were still alive, they must have heard with much satisfaction that the boy whose early determination to take his own line in life had robbed them of the pleasure of assisting at his birth was come to such eminence and reputation, in forty-two years.

When he was made Speaker there were no newspapers to report the proceedings in Parliament for the benefit of Mileham. But the curious of to-day may read, in Hansard's "Parliamentary History," or as that is quoted by Lord Campbell, the quaint, flowery speeches made on that occasion.

During the short time that he officiated as Speaker he showed tact and cleverness.

As Attorney-General his duty was to attend in the House of Lords, and give advice to their Lordships on points of law. He was also charged with the conveyance of messages from the Upper to the Lower House, and, in State trials, he had to lead the prosecution. Two of these had unfortunate results for him, those of Lord Essex and Sir Walter Raleigh. His conduct towards both of these prisoners was indefensibly brutal, and has left a stain on his character which can never be wiped out. The fact that Essex had been the friend and patron of his rival, Francis Bacon, and had done his best to secure for him the Attorney-Generalship, should have inclined Coke to a more rigid impartiality and politeness in his demeanour towards the prisoner. Instead of following that course, he permitted himself to use inflamed and violent language. At the trial of Raleigh he was even worse, and surpassed himself in the rudeness of his invective. His conduct almost justified Mr. Trevelyan's description of him as "one of the most disagreeable figures in our history" and "the most brutal Attorney-General who ever served the Stuarts." His descendants must bear the reproach as best they may that on these occasions their famous ancestor acted brutally. It is to be hoped that reports of his speeches did not find their way to Mileham. Surely the tender hearts of the gossips there would have been shocked.

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[1] His notes for these seven readings, entirely in his own handwriting, are still preserved at Holkham (MS. 725).

And now let us leave the Attorney-General to his law, and say something about his private life at home. Those who wish to do so may read much about his legal achievements during Queen Elizabeth's reign in the pages of Woolrych or Johnson or Campbell, but none of his biographers had access to certain papers now at Holkham and Huntingfield which throw light upon his relations with his family. It has been my good fortune to decipher some of these, and the next chapters will show what has been extracted from them.

CHAPTER II

EDWARD COKE AND HIS WIFE

FIVE years after he was called to the Bar—*i.e.*, in 1583—Edward Coke had the luck to win the hand, and, I hope, the heart, of a very charming lady in the county of Suffolk. She was Bridget, elder daughter of Mr. John Paston, and she lived at Huntingfield Hall with her mother and her stepfather, Mr. Edmund Bedingfield of Oxburgh. They were married at the little village church of Cokely, close to Huntingfield, on August 13. It was a suitable alliance in every way. He was well-born and the most rising member of his profession. She was a daughter of the ancient House of Paston, which, through the publication of the "Paston Letters," is familiar to everyone, and she was an heiress. Indeed, from a worldly point of view, her family was more distinguished than her husband's, for her branch of the Pastons was related to families of such note as the Cavendishes of Chatsworth, and the Manners, Earls of Rutland: Bridget could address the first Countess of Rutland as Cousin Eleanor, and might have been invited to Haddon Hall, had anyone been living there in her day. No doubt she was as handsome as such a lady deserved to be, but both Mr. Johnson, in his "Life of Coke," and Mrs. Stirling, in her "Coke of Norfolk and his Friends," made a strange blunder when they mistook for an original portrait of her the fancy picture which hangs at Holkham. For it was not painted till Bridget had been dead 150 years.

Thomas Coke, first Earl of Leicester, caused it to be painted about 1755 by Andrea Casali, an Italian. Casali must have drawn upon his imagination for Bridget's features, for there is no portrait of her in the list of pictures handed down by her husband to his posterity.

It was Thomas Fuller, author of "The Worthies of England," who began the story of Bridget Paston's great wealth, which has been accepted by every succeeding writer on the history of Chief Justice Coke—Lord Birkenhead, the latest of them, not excepted. Fuller speaks of the Chief Justice's "incomparable wife, whose portion, viis et modis, amounted to £30,000, her vertues not falling under valuation." Others have added "a great landed estate" to Fuller's £30,000, and Mr. Johnson says that Edward Coke succeeded to the estate of Huntingfield Hall, Suffolk, on the death of Bridget's mother. That is quite contrary to the truth.

Huntingfield was, and is, a fine estate in the county of Suffolk. It had belonged to very great people, the De la Poles, and Henry VIII. gave it to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. Queen Elizabeth gave it to her cousin Sir Henry Carey, whom she created Lord Hunsdon, son of Mary Boleyn, sister to Queen Anne Boleyn. Tradition has it that Queen Elizabeth stayed there, but I can find no documentary evidence of this. The Manor House must have been a noble and venerable mansion. The Reverend C. Davey (1722-97) saw it before it was pulled down, and has left a description:

> "The approach to the Hall was by a bridge over an arm of the River Blythe, and, if I remember rightly, through three square courts. The Gallery was continued the whole length of the building, which, opening with a balcony over the porch, gave an air of grandeur, with some variety, to the front. The Grand Hall was built round six massive oaks which supported the roof as they grew. Upon these the foresters and Yeomen of the Guard used to hang their nets, cross-bows, calivers, great saddles, belts, etc. The roots of them had long been decayed when I visited this romantic building, and the shafts, sawn off at the bottom, were supported by irregular logs of wood driven under them, or by masonry."

What a pity that so noble an old house should have been demolished!

Now Bridget Paston's mother had married, firstly, a Mr. Nicholas Arrowsmith, who had a lease of all this fine property from the Duke of Suffolk. When he died he left his widow all these leases, and she carried them to her second husband, Mr. John Paston. They lived at Huntingfield and had two daughters, Bridget Coke and Elizabeth Jermyn. When Mr. Paston died he left the leases back to his wife and afterwards to Bridget, as well as some property of his own in and about Huntingfield, and his Manors of Sporle and Woodhall, and "1200 sheep which are in the foldcourse at Sporle."

The Widow Paston then took a third husband, Edmund, head of the great Norfolk house of Bedingfield, but, instead of living at his noble seat of Oxburgh, they continued at Huntingfield Hall, and Bridget was married to Edward Coke from that house.

Mrs. Bedingfield died in 1595, but Edward Coke and his wife continued to visit Huntingfield, and in 1614 he succeeded in buying the whole estate—"all that Lordship and Manor of Huntingfield and Park, Capitall Messuage and Scite of the Manor," etc.—from Sir Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon, giving £4,500 for it, a great sum indeed.

Huntingfield, then, was not part of Bridget Paston's dowry, but she must have been heiress to Sporle with its sheep, and Woodhall, and whatever else had come to her mother from Mr. Arrowsmith and from her father. John Paston, elder brother of Clement Paston, who was rich enough to build the great house of Oxnead, cannot have been without money of his own, so that even if £30,000 be an exaggerated estimate of Bridget's wealth, she was undoubtedly an heiress. Jane Austen tells us that Mrs. Elton had that sum "which will always be called £10,000," and Bridget may have had a sum which "would always be called £30,000." There we must leave the question of her wealth.

There is certain evidence that she was regarded as a matrimonial prize, and had many suitors. From a letter (now at Huntingfield) written in 1579 by Sir William Paston to his "worshipful and loving Aunt Anne Bedingfield," it appears that there had been a design to match her with her stepfather's grandson and heir, Sir Henry Bedingfield of Oxburgh. But this was abandoned, and Sir Henry afterwards married a daughter of "Belted Will," the famous Lord William Howard of Naworth. Sir William Paston had a candidate of his own:

> "I am requested to be a meane to you to bestow her onne my cosen William Heydon's sonne and heire who ys so proper a youth in every respecte as I and my Uncle Clemente have great good lykinge of, assuering you that yf he and his estate to comme were as well known to you as yt is to us, you would willingly geve your concente thereto with us, and accept the same being nowe offered without Drifte of Delaye (that otherwise will be sought by many, he being now well known to be the beste marriage in Norfolk or Suffolk)."

He invites Bridget to stay with him, and will send horses and men to fetch her. Later, he despatches ambassadors to confer with Mrs. Bedingfield, and says:

> "There ys not the lyke young gent for his personage, wisdom, learning and staydness of his years in Norff. Suff. Essex or Kent the which is more to be accounted of than all that his father shall leave him. And although yt hath been reported unto you that his said father was above £6,000 in debt, I wd. wishe you not to geve credyt unto any such sclanderous report, for as farr as I can by any means learne, he oweth not nowe above one thousand pounds the which will soon be discharged."

Sir William's grandfather had married a daughter of Sir Henry Heydon of Baconsthorpe, hence the cousinship—Blomfield says that the "said father" had contracted large debts by engaging in speculation with London merchants. The son, Christopher, was "an eminent scholar," and failing to capture Bridget Paston, he married, first, a Miss Rivett, and, secondly, a Miss Dodge.

A rough draft of a letter from Mrs. Bedingfield about all this is preserved at Huntingfield. It is evidently to some confidential friend. She says that Sir William and Mr. Clement Paston had offered to make up the difference, if Sir William Heydon's proposed settlements should fall short of "the best offers made by others." Mrs. Bedingfield asked if they would bestow "one hundreth pounds by the yere uppon their kynsman and my pore daughter." Apparently the answer was not satisfactory, and Mrs. Bedingfield was indignant at the suggestion that she should "send over my daughter to them to the ende proof might be made whether there might fall out any lykinge between the young partyes. But it hath not been an accustomed manner of dealing to have an interview between the younge folks befor condycons were fully concluded and agreed upon . . . I marvayle that they would ther kinswoman should seme to travell to seke a husband."

So the proposals of marriage with scions of such great Norfolk families as Bedingfield and Heydon being declined, the brilliant young lawyer, Edward Coke, carried off the prize. He buried his mother-in-law in Huntingfield Church, and commemorated her alliances and her worth on a tablet which thus concludes:

> "She was a Godly, wise and virtuous woman, and kept a bountiful house at Huntingfield, especially for the poore, nere fifty yeares. She departed this life in her good old age, 20th June, 1595, Edward Coke, Esq., Attorney-General to the Queen's Majesty . . . for the Great duty and reverence he ought [*i.e.*, owed] the said Anne, caused this momument in memory of her to be made."

No doubt she was an admirable woman.

Her Prayer-Book would be among the Holkham treasures, had all the Chief Justice's descendants obeyed his earnest commands that care should be taken of his books, for in his Catalogue of them we read: "Mrs. Bedingfield's Prayer-Book, fairely bound, with divers pictures, hymnes." A beautiful book, no doubt. Perhaps a unique example of Edward VI.'s First Prayer-Book. Certainly it bore the impress of Mrs. Bedingfield's pious thumb and finger, and the memory of the descendant who allowed it to fall to pieces or wander astray is not to be blessed.

But the poetical eulogy which she sanctioned for her second husband has fortunately remained decipherable upon his tomb, to show the present race of Cokes what an admirable ancestor they have in Mr. John Paston:

"This earthly coulered marble Stone, behold with weeping Eyes,
Under whose cold and massy weight John Paston buried lyes
A gentle man by birthe and deedes the second sonne to one
Sir William Paston worthie Knight deceased long agone
This gentle Esquier in Huntingfield a widdowe tooke to wyfe
That hight Anne Arrowsmith with whom he led a loving Lyf
Eleven years space and somewhat more by whom he also had
One onelye child a virgin myld his aged hert to glad
In youthful yeres this Gentleman a gallant cortier was
With rarest vertues well adorned to courtiers all a glasse
A Pensioner to princes foure Henrye theight that Roye
To Edward King to Marye Quene to Elsabethe our Joye
Which foure he served faythfullie the Court lament his end
His countrye Neighboures all bewayle the loss of such a friend
To poore a present remedie to honest men an ayde
A father to the fatherless the widdows playnte he wayde
Against the hongrie travailer his doores were never shutt
Against the Seelie needye soule his purse was never knite
When he had lyved three skore yeres and foure death closed up his eyes
He lyved well, he dyed well and buryed here he lyes."

I cannot explain why the widow stated in this inscription

EDWARD COKE, ATTORNEY-GENERAL TO QUEEN ELIZABETH.

From the portrait at Holkham.

HUNTINGFIELD OAK.

that she and her husband had "one onelye child"—for Mr. John Paston's Will is clear:

> "Item, I give and bequeath to Elizabeth Paston, my daughter £400. . . ."

Besides, there exists a letter from Sir William Paston to Mr. Bedingfield concerned with the proposal of marrying "my cosen Elizabeth" to Mr. Jermyn. It is very odd.

Thomas Coke, first Earl of Leicester, lineal descendant of Edward and Bridget Coke, sold Huntingfield to Sir Joshua Vanneck. The fine old hall was pulled down, so that nothing remains now of the ancient glories of the house where Edward wooed and won his Bridget. The church is there, however, where her parents were buried and one of her babies, where she carried her children to be christened. And there still stands a magnificent oak under whose branches the little Cokes must have played. It is a colossal veteran, putting forth leaves and fruit to this day, though quite hollow, and it measures thirty-three feet at breast-high. From a tradition that the Great Queen sat in its branches and shot deer as they were driven by, it is still known as "Queen Elizabeth's Oak."

After Mrs. Bedingfield's death, the Cokes visited Huntingfield from time to time, but no longer regarded it as their country-house. They built a house, of moderate size, at Godwick in Norfolk, not far from Mileham. This was to be considered the principal seat of the family. For although Edward Coke spent the latter years of his life at Stoke Poges, where he bought a large estate in 1599, he settled Stoke upon his second wife and her heirs, and directed that his heirlooms, his library, etc., should be kept in his house at Godwick. In 1610 he bought an estate in the parish of Holkham, some twenty miles north of Godwick, and prudently arranged a marriage between his fourth son, John, and a young lady who owned another estate in the same parish. Little did he dream, surely, that in years to come Godwick Hall would be a ruin, and his heirs be found dwelling in a palace at Holkham more magnificent even than Huntingfield, though not, it may be, so venerable.

CHAPTER III

EDWARD AND BRIDGET COKE—THEIR HOME LIFE

THERE is now in the possession of the family a manuscript which illustrates the domestic life of Edward and Bridget Coke; it is a book of their household accounts from October 17, 1596, to December 17, 1597 (Holkham MSS., 724). From it we learn that in October, 1596, Edward Coke, Attorney-General, with Bridget his wife, and their eldest daughter and their youngest boy, were living at their house in Castle Yard, Holborn, a locality convenient for the Temple, where, not seldom, he stayed to work at night, and supped and slept there. Why Lord Campbell should positively assert that he had no London house, I cannot say. The account book shows that they kept a great retinue of servants, and what used to be called a "good table"; more delicate gourmets might use the expression "rude plenty," and not be far wrong.

The quantity of fish they consumed is extraordinary. Presents come from the Norfolk sea-coast of fish with curious names—"thornback or flay" (said to be the common skate), a great "breat," besides flounders and mackarell. Fish of some sort seems to have been provided nearly every day. Bread for the week usually cost between thirty and forty shillings; butter is twopence per dish; fresh butter, only an occasional luxury, is threepence per pound. "Wheate flower" costs four shillings per half-barrel, rye is only three shillings for the same measure. A distinction is observed between household bread and "bread for my master's table." On a special occasion of fine feasting, "Tenne dozen of manchetts at the bakers for my master's table" cost ten shillings.

Beef is bought twenty stone at a time, at eighteenpence a stone; and "graye salte" at eightpence a "pecke," to "powder the beef withal." Roast beef appears occasionally and also mutton, but the chief reliance for a good dinner was placed on capons, chicken, rabbits, game and venison, and almost every week a " pigge," which, costing only two shillings, must have been a sucking-pig.

Charles Lamb would certainly have enjoyed himself in Castle Yard, Holborn, as far as the bill of fare was concerned. The conversation, led by a host whose library contained no plays by Shakespeare, or other Elizabethan dramatist, might have pleased him less; but the pig was doubtless roasted to a turn, and your " grown porkers " did not make frequent appearance at the Cokes' table, except at Christmas-time. For the Christmas of 1596, one " pork of the best sorte " was provided, and in a twelvemonth we read of eleven " swyne for the provision of the house " with " something of a shock," until we remember that Sir Roger de Coverley always killed " eight fat Hogs for Christmas, and sent a string of their puddings and a pack of cards to every poor family in the parish." The expression " sente unto my master or my mistris " occurs almost daily throughout the year, and shows that the age of Elizabeth was indeed the age of presents. Again we are reminded of Charles Lamb: " Presents endear Absents, I often think," says " Saint Charles," and so thought the many friends and dependents of Edward and Bridget Coke. Not only do " tame villatic fowl " come in quantities, whether capons, chicken or " hennes," but pheasants, partridges, quails, woodcock, snypes, teales, mallardes, redshanks, herneshawes, " synetts," or swans, geese, and " wild fowl out of Lincolnshire, called Knottes." These were a rare delicacy. In Fuller's account of Lincolnshire, he says: " As the Eagle is the Bird of Jove, so they have a bird called The King's Bird, namely Knuts, sent for hither out of Denmark, at the charge and for the use of King Knut." Ben Jonson liked a knot, though he spells it " Knat." Wishing to beguile a friend to supper by the attraction of the bill of fare, he writes:

> " I'll tell you more, and lie, so you will come,
> Of partridge, pheasant, woodcock, of which some,
> May yet be there, and godwit if we can;
> Knat, rail, and ruff too."

Alas that presents of black birds should be so often sent; and there is one entry of " sparrows and two dozen small birds." Twice comes a present of a " great borre ready dressed," brought on the first occasion by two men, on the second by three, necessitating the sending out to buy "a greate earthen dysshe to boyle the borre in."

But the appetite boggles at the recital of venison. On May 29 there comes "One bucke from the Queen's Majesty." It is sent by Mr. Boyer, a gentleman usher, and five shillings is given to "his man that brought it." On June 14 my Lady Hatton sends "one fatte bucke." (Her man also receives five shillings.) And next day, "sente more by the Countess of Derby another Bucke." This time the servant gets ten shillings, and a bushel of "wheate flower" is sent for to "bake the venison withal." During July Sir Robert Cecil sends one fatte bucke," and his man receives ten shillings; a few days later another comes from Mr. Roger Manners, the "tip" this time being six shillings. Lighter and more elegant gifts of food are not wanting, either. The Queen's gardener sends apples; Mrs. Bridges sends "presarved plommes"; Mrs. Warner "one piece of Conger, and six Worcestershire cheeses"; and the Steward of the Temple, "an oringadowe pye, and an apple tart." Only a few days before, Mrs. Bridget had paid two shillings for a "pound of oringadoes to make a pye"—a luscious dish, for oringado seems to have been candied orange-peel. It is a little unpleasant to realise that all the meat and the sticky pastry had to be torn to pieces by Bridget's pretty fingers, since forks had not come into fashion. But she had a splendid rose-water basin to dip them into; of that we are quite certain.

Early in December, 1596, the family moves from Holborn to pass the Christmas at Osterley, for on the 3rd, twelvepence are spent on a "Rope of Onyons" to be sent to Osterley. Osterley House, in a fine park, belonged to Sir Thomas Gresham, and his widow died there the week before the Cokes arrived, but it seems that it was Osterley House to which they went. The Dowager Lady Jersey has found record of their having lived in it. Lady Gresham was an old friend of the family at Huntingfield, being herself a Suffolk lady—Anne Fernley, of West Creting. She was godmother to the Cokes' eldest daughter, Anne, afterwards Mrs. Sadleir. So they probably knew Osterley through her. And since she owned much property in Holkham, it is possible that the

Cokes' first knowledge of the future home of their family was due to her.

But notwithstanding the death of Lady Gresham, they go to Osterley and lay in abundant provisions for their Christmas cheer.

Humble visitors come up from Suffolk, who consumed "A piece of roasting beef for Mrs. Allen, Goodwyfe Johnson, and the rest of the company that came out of Suffolk with them." The poor of Osterley come with offerings of spice cake and apples. On January 2 and 3, great feasts are spread, and presents are sent of swans, blackbirds, rabbits, and one lamb. All this is but to lead up to "Provisions for the Christening." Nothing so far has suggested that the mistress of the house was lying-in, and needed special diet. The more refined items of the christening bill of fare included "Six crammed pulletts," at two shillings the pullett, ten mallards, eight woodcock, four dozen larks, twelve teales, eight snipes, and "sturgion." "Leaf Gold to Gild pastry withal," "preserved cherryes, whyte wyne to boyle capons withal, Jordan almonds, a pint of mustard Seed, Bisketts," and "Saunders to colour," add something to the bill.

The baby, born with such an accompaniment of feasting, December 27, 1596, was named Bridget. One of her godfathers was Mr. Nicholas Hare (of the Stow Bardolph Hares). In his will, dated January, 1596-97, only a few days after his godchild's birth, he remembers her. He bequeaths to "my Verie good friend Mr. Edward Coke, Her Majestie's Attornie General, a parcell of plate, of the value of £20. Item, I give to Bridget Coke, my God-daughter, a parcell of plate of like value."

Little Bridget's mother stayed in the house for nearly a month; it is not until January 24 that we read "for my Mistris Churching, a forequarter of veal, a side of lamb, two capons, two pulletts, a Swanne."

It is pleasant to think that amid all this feasting the poor were not forgotten. Coke's great rival, Francis Bacon, charged him with miserliness, and hard dealing towards tenants and dependents. It is well that another story should be told by our account book. Throughout the winter there is a weekly entry of "leekes" for the "poore folks' potage or porigh," and also frequent mention of meal to bake bread for the "poore folks." If Bacon had ground for his charges, I suppose we must conclude that these charitable expenses were incurred by Bridget, true daughter of "bountiful" Mrs. Bedingfield, and that after her death they were discontinued. But I do not believe Bacon in this matter. There is plenty of evidence at Holkham to show that Sir Edward Coke was a kind and generous man, however brutal he may sometimes have been to prisoners in the dock.

So we come to Easter, 1597, when, back again in Holborn, they consume two lambs for their Paschal feast. In April, Mr. Collins, Gentleman Usher to the Queen, sends two loaves of Her Majesty's bread. In a week of May, "a coombe of wheate was baked in the house besides that taken of the baker, that came from Wighton in Norfolk, for household bread." This is interesting as showing that wheat was grown in the neighbourhood of Holkham in the reign of Elizabeth. On June 5, "greene pease" come in: half a peck of them costs two shillings; a week later they are half that price, and one month afterwards "a pecke of greene pease for the serving men" costs but fourpence.

A move from London to Godwick is heard of on June 10, for we read of twelvepence paid for "two pound of frankincense" to "eyer" (air) the house at Godwick. On June 14, "my master sends four maids to Godwick in Norff. and Mrs. Baker with her household stuff that she sent thither and other provisions." The land at Godwick had been bought for £3,500 in 1580. This was not the first entry of the Cokes into their new house, though the frankincense may have been used to purify away the smell of new paint. For in the Bodleian there is a letter from Edward Coke, dated "Godwick, Sept. 5, 1596." This gives a specimen of a kind of letter he must very frequently have had to write—thanks for a present. It is to Sir Thomas Knyvett: "I thank you heartily for my very good Venison, and for many other favours which I shall be willing to requite with all thankful readiness." And from Mrs. Buxton's papers (Hist. MSS. Comm.) we learn that on September 4, 1596, Mr. Clement Paston was expecting a visit from the Cokes, then at Godwick, at his house of Oxnead. He asks Mr. Buxton of Tibenham for a buck, as his nephew, Mr. Attorney Coke, and his wife are coming, and he wishes to entertain them "as is fit for such personages."

Mrs. Baker and her maids had nearly a month in which to make ready for the company.

Meanwhile life in London is pleasantly diversified by presents of the Queen's bread per Mr. Collins: "Gave the fawkner to give his man, 12d." This shows that the Attorney-General kept a falconer, so that he was no enemy to sport. He knew something about dogs, too, for Mr. Rye, quoting the Domestic Papers of James I., tells us that he sent a Norfolk "Tumbler" to the king, to "play on Salisbury Warren" ("Hist. Norf.," p. 131.) A "tumbler" was a dog trained to simulate lameness, or merely to gambol and frisk in so innocent a manner, that the game, deceived as to its power to pounce, allowed it to come close to them, when it threw off the mask. One is glad to think that the Cokes can trace their love of sport right up to the Chief Justice.

A quart of strawberries cost sixpence on June 26, and a present of them is sent from the Queen's garden; cherries at fourteenpence a pound are bought the same day, and "greene onyones." Sunday, June 26, "my master gives a supper party," and the bill of fare includes two "hartichokes." Which of the company said "No" to the artichokes? I feel sure our host did not, unless all the leaves were taken before it came to his turn to be helped, for from this day artichokes were constantly bought, or sent "in presents," and appear far more frequently than any other vegetable on his table. He must have liked them extremely. It is certain that they were the "globe" artichokes, not the "Jerusalem," for that plant was unknown in England before 1617.

On July 4, Mrs. Bridget sets out for Godwick. Her courier was one Robert Mather, and he kept a careful note of "charges layd out." "For cakes and beare, three and five-pence laid out betwixt London and Ware for my mistris and the rest of her company. Paid for her dyette at Ware, twenty two shillings, for herself, Mrs. Anne,[1] and Mr. Clement. July 5, Tuesdai, my mistris and her company dined at Barkway. Beer by the way at Puckeridge, 4d. July 6, Wednesdaye, my mistris lay at Thriplowe at Mr. Wood's near Cambridge; two pounds of cherryes, beere, 10d. At Witteford Brigg paid to Symon Dennys for a bottle of beere he bought for Mr. Clement to drink by the way, 6d. July 7, Thursday, Simon lay at Mylnall (Mildenhall), my mistris lay at Mr. Warner's. Beere at Brandon Ferry for the child and the rest of the company, 4d."

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[1] Anne Coke, born 1584, died about 1670. Clement Coke, born 1594, died 1639.

Next day the mistress reached Godwick, a fairly long day's journey from Mildenhall. Her lord had probably enjoyed his bachelor week in London. He dines twice with the Lord Keeper[1] and four nights at the Temple. The Queen sends him raspberries from her garden, and "Mr. Dr. Drewry" sends "two greate salmon trout," but these were handed on to the Lord Keeper for his dinner-parties. On July 14, Thursday, he follows and travelling much faster, joins his wife at Godwick on Saturday night. No doubt Mr. and Mrs. Coke journeyed comfortably and without much counting of cost.

As soon as they are settled at Godwick a perfect shower of seasonable gifts descends on them from their country neighbours high or lowly. Goodwife Clover, Goodwife Church, "ould Frank's wife," "ould Benet Wigge," and others, send chicken, peas, strawberries and honey. Old Anthony Wightman is so liberal as to offer a fat pig. Mistress Weaver sends a "maunde[2] of thepes,"[3] and her boy that brought it had fourpence for his pains. Norfolk air makes the household even hungrier than it is in London. In one day, when I suppose there is a party, there are consumed two swans, two green geese, three capons, four mallards, fourteen rabbits, and eight chicken.

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[1] Sir Thomas Egerton (1546-1617), Baron Ellesmere and Viscount Brackley; Lord Chancellor, 1603. Their friendship did not last. Ellesmere became a subservient King's man, while Coke, true patriot, was in opposition. In 1616 Ellesmere wrote of him to Lord Salisbury as "a turbulent, idle, broken-brayned fellow." Coke's friends corrupted the title of Brackley into "Break-Law" (D. N. B.).

[2] "Maunde"—a basket, word still used by Lowestoft fishermen (Mr. A. H. Patterson).

[3] "Thepes," sometimes "fapes"—old Norfolk dialect word for green gooseberries.

New wheat is bought on August 15, and this must have cheered Mr. Coke, who had written to Lord Burleigh on August 4: "This unseasonable wynde and rayne (which our countrie hath tasted in so great abundance) is to be feared will continue this present dearth, wherewith our countrie is grievously afflicted, unless God of his mercy do send a more seasonable time to ripen, and inne corn and other commodities." After this my master goes to Norwich to vote for Sir John Townshend, and Mr. Henry Gawdy as Knights of the Shire, but on September 12 the country holiday is over. "My mistris and her company take their journey to Norwich, and soe to Huntingfield, and soe back to London." It must have been a great company, for Robert Mathew at Norwich pays seventeen shillings and fourpence, for "twenty five of my fellows, their supper at 8d. the man." Their breakfasts cost him nine shillings and fourpence. Mrs. Anne is given a shilling to bestow on the prisoners at Norwich Castle, and Mr. Mingay has fifteen shillings to "give to my Master his Nurse"; one of many kindly touches which show that Edward Coke's heart was not so hard as his enemies declared it to be. Pears are ripe, and my master gives a poor woman half a crown for a few. His vails to servants are always generous, and he gives many a shilling or crown piece in charity. Nor is he too stern a father. Mrs. Anne has two shillings given her to play cards at Mr. Gawdy's house. They reach Huntingfield safely, and stay there until September 18. Here we meet with the first mention of little John[1] and Henry Coke, afterwards such important members of the family; their father "tips" them each two shillings. They are probably living with the parson, by way of school, before they go to Westminster.

The party travels by Woodbridge, Glemham, where they stay at Mr. Colby's house, Colchester and Chelmsford. Here Robert pays three shillings to Goodman Wigge for "one box of oynment for my mistris's fingers." Chemists were as dear then as they are now. Lastly they stay at one Mr. Baker's, and give six shillings and sixpence to the servants. The usual welcome awaits them in London. Among the givers of presents is the Queen, who sends pears.

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[1] John Coke, born 1590, died 1661; succeeded his brother, Sir Robert, in the great family estates, 1553, and was the first Coke to live at Holkham. Henry Coke, born 1592, died 1661; grandfather of Robert Coke who succeeded to the estates 1671.

Of the more interesting items in the autumn accounts I note a present of "cowcumbers" in September, and a "gammon of bacon" (the only time bacon is mentioned) and a doe sent by the Countess of Cumberland.[1]

Late in November, "my mistris with part of the household removed this day, the 24th, to Hame[2] in Essex, to Mrs. Rooks's house there, and Mr. and Mrs. Knightlie[3] and part of the servants remaining in London, and my master and his men continue their diet at the house."

"St. Andrew's Day. This day went the men that wayte on my master at the Temple on borde wages. 1 December, Mr. and Mrs. Knightlie with the rest of the household servants come from London to Hame, leaving no one but ould Margaret to keep the house." Now the steward begins to speak of "West Hame," and marks a distinction between food consumed at West Ham and London. Presently the name "Upton, in West Hame," appears.

This was to be the last time Bridget Coke was to leave Holborn for the country, to spend her Christmas. Barely six months passed before she died.

The account book comes to an end on December 17, the last entries relating to beer and ale. The brewer's bill from July 6 to December 8 was £15 15s., for "Courte beers and ale." This must have been specially good beer; for ordinary purposes they brewed at home. "Clarett wyne and sacke" are not infrequently sent for, but there is one entry that shows that the cellars at Holborn House were used for wine: "Paid for two quarts of clarett wyne, at 6d. a quart, when my master his wyne was drawn out." Each week the accounts are signed as "discharged by me, Bridget Coke." She was not to superintend her husband's house much longer. Next year, she died at Ham, June 27, 1598. In the preceding January she had given birth to her tenth child, Thomas, who died as soon as he was born.

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[1] Margaret, daughter of Francis Russell, second Earl of Bedford, mother of the famous Lady Anne Clifford, Countess of Dorset and Pembroke, ancestress of Lady Margaret Tufton, Baroness Clifford, and Countess of Leicester.

[2] Carthew says ("Hundred of Launditch"): "After Ann Bedingfields death, he (Edward Coke) seems to have resided at Ham"; and in the Pedigree he gives Upton, Middlesex, as the birthplace of Thomas the youngest son. As the account book shows, Upton was not in Middlesex, but in West Ham, Essex. A street there is still called Upton Lane.

[3] Mr. George Knightley was half-brother to Winifred, Edward Coke's mother. He and his wife seem to have lived with their rich nephew, and no doubt made themselves useful.

She was buried at Tittleshall, where her sorrowing husband erected a monument of marble to her memory. Under a canopy Bridget kneels before an altar, habited in the farthingale, ruff, and head-dress of Queen Elizabeth's time. Beneath her are sculptured six sons and two daughters, little Elizabeth and little Thomas, who died as babies, being left out. Over all is a large shield, Coke impaling Paston, and over the figure is inscribed, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou surpassest them all." "His first and best wife," is inscribed on her daughter Anne's tomb, and he himself wrote of her (in Latin): "Most beloved and most excellent wife, she well and happily lived, and as the true handmaiden of the Lord, she fell asleep in the Lord, and now lives and reigns in Heaven."

Let not her posterity doubt these words; there is a ring of sincerity about them. Pray God that she lived a happy life, happier than her husband! For he, in spite of his great talents, wealth, and worldly success, cannot have been a happy man!

CHAPTER IV

EDWARD COKE AND HIS SECOND WIFE

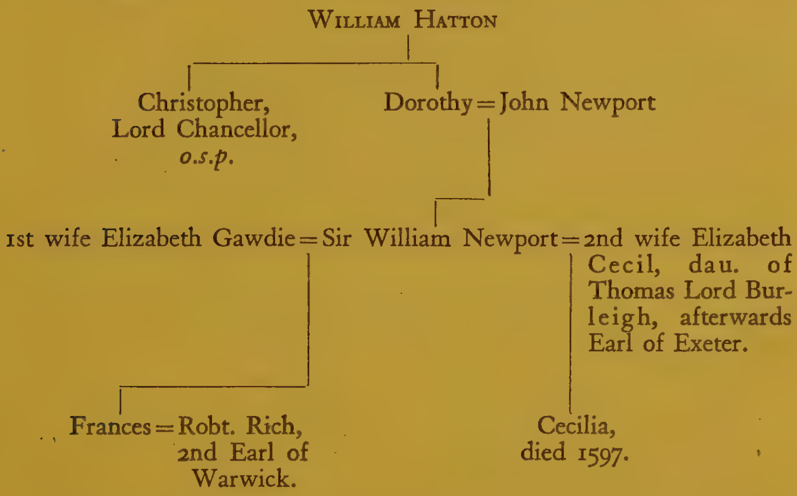
OUR first chapter gave a brief sketch of Edward Coke up to the days of his fame as Attorney-General. It closed upon an inharmonious note, for allusion to his conduct towards Essex and Raleigh was necessary. The description of him in his home life which followed was pleasanter, but that, also, ended sadly, with the death of his good and charming wife.

Having lost her, he seems, if we may so say, to have lost his head. Not otherwise can the course on which he immediately embarked be accounted for. More than incomprehensible, it was not human. There is no reason to doubt the sincerity of his affection for Bridget, or the tender language in which he spoke of her. That the madman in him should gain control of his reason within a few weeks of her death suggests that his moral being was, for the time, shattered.

If it is not pleasant to think of a man who was normally a kind husband and father, and a scrupulously honest man, behaving as Edward Coke behaved to Walter Raleigh, it is revolting to think that his dear good wife was hardly quiet in her grave before he began to think of marrying again. She had left him with eight young children. Had he thought it his duty to provide a kindly stepmother for them, we should not have wondered. But nothing of that sort could have been in his mind when he resolved to seek another wife. All his intentions were worldly. He desired to ally himself with one who might help him in his public career, and, incidentally, would add to his wealth. It was a disastrous piece of folly. The wisest man in all the legal profession, he was, at this moment, the least wise man in England—he must have been out of his mind.

Five short weeks after Bridget's death the great Lord Burleigh was buried, and it is said that on meeting his sons at the funeral, Edward Coke offered himself to them as a suitor for their niece Elizabeth, the young widow of Sir William Hatton-Newport! Only five short weeks!

Lord Burleigh's eldest son Thomas, in a few years to be made Earl of Exeter, had eight daughters, of whom Elizabeth, the sixth, had married, as his second wife, William Newport, son of the celebrated Lord Chancellor Hatton's sister, Dorothy Newport. Newport's first wife was a daughter of Chief Justice Gawdie, and she left a daughter Frances, married to Robert Rich, second Earl of Warwick (whose fine portrait by Vandyke hangs in one of the drawing rooms at Holkham). Thus—


William Hatton
Christopher, Lord Chancellor, *o.s.p.*
Dorothy = John Newport
1st wife Elizabeth Gawdie = Sir William Newport = 2nd wife Elizabeth Cecil, dau. of Thomas Lord Burleigh, afterwards Earl of Exeter.
Frances = Robt. Rich, 2nd Earl of Warwick.
Cecilia, died 1597.

The rich Lord Chancellor Hatton had made an heir of his nephew, Sir William Newport, and what Sir William did not leave to his daughter Frances, Countess of Warwick, he left to his widow, Elizabeth. This widow, then, was young, highly connected, her near relations belonging to the first political circles, and she had money and was a prize well worth winning, if worldly considerations are to count before everything. In character she seems to have been frivolous and self-willed. Of course she was a beauty, and she styled herself Lady Hatton.

Among her more persevering suitors was Francis Bacon. The lady, however, declined Mr. Bacon's proposals. Desire to triumph in love as well as law over the rival he hated was a powerful factor, no doubt, in urging Edward Coke to try and win the lady. The Cecils had always regarded the Attorney-General with favour, and if they did not encourage the match, they certainly did not oppose it. Except for the indecency, considering the so recent death of Bridget, why should they? On the ground of family, he was their equal, and his talents and force were likely to raise him to the highest station, and he was very rich. It is more difficult to understand why the widow agreed to marry him. Of course, what Lord Campbell says about marrying "an old wrinkled Attorney-General who must have seemed a Methuselah to her," is all nonsense. Edward Coke was forty-seven, it is true, but he was undoubtedly a very comely person. His portraits, painted ten years after his second marriage, show neither a grey hair nor a wrinkle. At any rate, she consented; and such was her husband's anxiety to secure her—for her suitors were numerous as Penelope's—that they were hastily and clandestinely married, in a private house, on November 7, 1598, a little more than four months after Bridget Paston's death.

All the world was amazed. Mr. John Chamberlain wrote:

> "The Quene's Attorney married the Lady Hatton, to the great admiration of all men, that after so many large and likely offers, she should decline to a man of his qualitie, and they will not believe it was without a misterie."

An arrant old gossip, this Chamberlain; there was no "declining" for a Cecil to marry a Coke. But the marriage did more than cause a nine days' wonder, and disturb the peace of letter-writers and rival lawyers. Private marriages were against the Canonical Law, and this marriage roused the old Archbishop at Lambeth, who at once began a prosecution of Coke, his lady, and the parson who had read the service, threatening them with "the greater excommunication," which carried such dire penalties as deprivation of the Sacraments, forfeiture of goods, and perpetual imprisonment! Here was a parlous state of affairs. The most eminent lawyer in England to be prosecuted for breaking the Law! Archbishop Whitgift, when Master of Trinity, had known Coke. On his becoming Attorney-General he had sent him a Greek Testament, saying, "You have studied Common Law long enough, now you should study the Law of God." But their friendship did not deter His Grace from instant action, and he at once put forth a Proclamation against all such private marriages. Coke and his party, however, made humble submission, professing ignorance of the Ecclesiastical Law, and they were presently forgiven.

It is fairly certain that the marriage was not a happy one even at first. A lawyer devoted to his law and a gay young lady who loved the life at Court were not well mated. But too much has been made of her refusal to call herself "Mrs. Coke," and keeping her style as Lady Hatton. Many wives, in our own day, too, have preferred to keep a title, and nothing said against them for so doing. By the time that Coke was knighted, relations had become strained between them. When an earldom was conferred on her father, she might have styled herself Lady Elizabeth Coke, but she seems to have preferred to be called Lady Hatton to the end.

She owned a fine house in Holborn which was called Hatton House—the name Hatton Gardens reminds us of her to this day—and her husband bought, in 1599, a noble property at Stoke Poges, paying £4,000 to Katharine Countess of Huntingdon for it, and settled it upon her and her issue. It is not to the credit of Coke's various biographers that they should have stated that Stoke was her property before she married him. Two daughters were born to them—Elizabeth, who died, and Frances, who grew up to be the heroine of a disagreeable story which shall be told in its place.

Elizabeth had the honour of having the Queen as her godmother. This we learn from Chamberlain, who wrote rather enigmatically about the baby's birth:

"The Lady Hatton is brought to bed of a daughter, which stoppes the mouth of the olde slaunder." What can he mean? He goes on to say that "about ten dayes ago (Aug. 13, 1599) it was christened with great solemnitie, the Queen (by her deputie the Lady of Oxford), and the Countess Dowager of Darbie, being Godmothers, and the Lord Treasurer Godfather." Lady Oxford was Lady Hatton's aunt, and the treasurer was Lord Buckhurst.

CHAPTER V

EDWARD COKE, CHIEF JUSTICE—"AN HONEST AND JUST JUDGE"

HOWEVER uncomfortable Edward Coke may have been in his home life, outwardly all seemed prosperous. He had lost his eldest son, but five more great boys were growing up, and in 1601 his elder daughter made a good marriage with Mr. Ralph Sadleir of Standon. He lived more at his new house at Stoke Poges than in Norfolk—it must have been much more convenient—and here he had the expensive honour of entertaining Queen Elizabeth in 1601. Being at Windsor, she "stepped aside to Mr. Attorney's at Stoke." Though but a short visit, it was a very costly business. Chamberlain said he presented the Queen with jewels to the value of £1,000 or £1,200, and she gave Mr. Attorney Coke a fine silver gilt cup. This does not appear in the inventory of his plate. That Coke kept a hospitable house at Stoke for his neighbours we learn from Sir James Whitelocke's "Liber Familicus." On one occasion Sir James describes a large dinner-party: "I sent a salmon to my Lord Chief Justice at Stoke that cost me 22 shillings. He invited me with many other gentlemen of the County to the eating of it, and sent me half a buck afterwards." Whitelocke mentions that Sir Robert Coke and his charming wife, Theophila Berkeley, were there, and Coke's younger daughter Bridget (at this time the Widow Berney), several persons of quality, and other neighbours. After dinner "my Lord would have had me gone to Tables,[1] a match at double hand with himself and others," but Whitelocke had an engagement with Secretary Winwood, so could not play. A few days after this they meet at St. George's Chapel, Coke having been summoned to Windsor to see King James: "I asked him why he staid not at the Court to dinner. He told me, that whilst he stood by the King at dinner, he would ever be asking him questions of that nature that he had as liefe be out of the room." Whitelocke guessed that these uncomfortable questions were about the King's prerogative. Another time he goes to Stoke and finds not only Coke, but his difficult wife, Lady Elizabeth, there.

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[1] "Tables"—*i.e.*, backgammon.

Such was his reputation as a lawyer, that Coke might have been raised to the Bench at any time, but he was loth to forego the profits of his Attorneyship. It was said that this office was worth £7,000 a year, equal to £25,000 in 1914, and he could carry on private practice as well, whereas the Judges were very inadequately paid. However, in 1606, he agreed to accept the high office of Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, which was much the most lucrative, and "rode the Norfolk Circuit." Now the ancients of Mileham and Tittleshall must have been satisfied as to the fulfilment of the prophecy of his birth. For to the bucolic mind a Judge is a very great man indeed.

Lord Campbell, who, according to his bent, has made the most of Sir Edward Coke's failings, allows that as a Judge he was unrivalled:

> "As Attorney-General he perverted the Criminal Law to the oppression of many individuals: and the arrogance of his demeanour is unparalleled. But he made noble amends. The whole of his subsequent career is entitled to the highest admiration. Although holding his office at the pleasure of a King and Ministers disposed to render Courts of Justice the instruments of their tyranny and caprice, he conducted himself with as much lofty independence as any who have ornamented the Bench."

Sir Edward Coke was now to show himself as strenuous in defending the rights of the people against the King and obsequious Ministers, as he had been in expounding the Law and making money.

First of all King James, anxious to rule as an absolute Sovereign, tried to revive the "Court of High Commission" (hitherto only used for ecclesiastical trials), and to subject all persons to its jurisdiction from which there was no appeal. Coke opposed this successfully while he was a Judge. Next, Archbishop Bancroft and the clergy, to the gratification of the King, made a determined attempt to free the Church from the control of the Common Law; but Coke foiled them.

Again, the Archbishop maintained that the King had the right to sit as a Judge and try causes himself. The Judges were summoned to Whitehall that the King might hear what they had to say, when Lord Coke (as he was now styled) showed that the King had no such right by law and (I quote Lord Campbell), "the terror of Coke was the reason for the abandonment of the scheme."

These checks to his pretensions were highly displeasing to King James. Coke steadily declined in his favour, while the subservient Bacon increased his influence on the royal ear. Presently Bacon saw an opportunity to manœuvre Coke out of the Common Pleas and get himself made Attorney-General, Coke to be promoted to the Chief Justiceship of the King's Bench; this, though nominally promotion, was not so in reality, for the salary was under £300 a year. Bacon wrote artfully to the King: "It will strengthen the King's Causes greatly among the Judges, for both my Lord Coke will think himself near a Privy Councillor's place and thereupon turn obsequious, and a new man in the Judge's place will come in well with the other, and hold him hard to it, not without emulation between them which shall please the King best. Besides, the removal of my Lord Coke to a place of less profit will be thought abroad a kind of discipline to him for opposing himself in the King's Causes, the example of which will contain others more in awe."

In spite of Bacon's success with the King, Coke's public reputation grew higher and higher. That he bore no malice against the King was shown by his voluntary contribution of the large sum of £2,000 as a "benevolence" to meet pressing necessities of the Crown. Bacon told the King that he had a right to levy a "benevolence" as if it were a legal tax. "No," said Coke, "it is a free-will offering, not a tax."

At the trial of those concerned in the alleged murder of Sir Thomas Overbury by Lord Somerset and his wife, Coke earned the highest praise. The Queen (Anne of Denmark) ever regarded him with favour, and in a list of his "Rarities" which were to be heirlooms, he has described "A ringe sett with a Great diamond cutt with fawcetts, given to Sir Edward Coke by Queen Anne for the discoverynge of the poysoning of Sir Thomas Overbury, etc."

His grandson Roger Coke heard from his father some interesting details of his manner of life at the Temple, in connection with the Overbury case:

> "Some said that Sir Thomas Overbury's servant gave notice of it [the murder] to Sir Edward Coke, others that my lord of Canterbury had got knowledge of it, and made it known to Sir Ralph Winwood, Secretary of State. . . . The King was gone to hunt at Royston, and Somerset with him . . . when Sir Ralph came to Royston, and acquainted the King with what he had discovered about Overbury's murder. The King was surprised, and posted away a messenger to Sir Edward Coke, to apprehend the Earl.
>
> "Sir Edward Coke lay then at the Temple, and measured out his time at regular hours, two whereof were, to go to bed at nine o'clock, and rise again at three. At this time Sir Edward's son and some others were in Sir Edward's lodging, but not in bed, when the messenger, about one in the morning, knocked at the door, where the son saw him and knew him: says he, 'I come from the King, and must immediately speak with your father.' 'If you came from ten Kings,' he answered, 'you shall not; for I know my father's disposition to be such, that if he be disturbed in his sleep, he will not be fit for any business: but if you will do as we do, you shall be welcome, and about two hours hence, my father will rise, and you may then do as you please,' to which he assented.
>
> "At three, Sir Edward Coke rang a little bell, to give notice to his servant to come to him: and then the messenger went to him, and gave him the King's letter, and Sir Edward immediately made a warrant to apprehend Somerset, and sent to the King that he would wait upon him that day."

Mr. S. R. Gardiner says that Roger Coke was "mendacious and inaccurate," but there is no reason to doubt his description of his grandfather's way of living at the Temple.

Great was Lord Coke's reputation at this time. Outside the group of intriguers for place and Court favour, the public agreed with the opinion of him expressed by Ben Jonson in the manly and dignified "Epigram" he wrote upon him. If the Chancellorship had become vacant now it would have been hardly possible to pass him over. Even Bacon admitted, though he erased what he had written, that Coke would have been the best choice. But Egerton, now Lord Ellesmere, the Chancellor, lived on, and conflicts between his law and Lord Coke's disturbed the King greatly. Soon the royal anger was furiously kindled because the Chief Justice refused to appoint the favourite Villiers, or his nominee, to a rich sinecure, said to be worth £4,000 a year. Coke proposed to apply this income to increasing the inadequate salaries of the Judges, and refused the favourite.

Bacon's undermining influence grew stronger; and at last matters were brought to a crisis by the famous case of the "Commendams." This concerned the King's right to permit Bishops to hold other preferment along with their bishoprics. A trial was in progress when Bacon, by the King's direction, sent an order to Coke and the Judges to stay the action till the King's pleasure was known. By Coke's advice this order was disregarded as being illegal. He drew up a letter to the King which was signed by all the Judges. But the King in Council refused to receive it and an historic scene took place of which a brief account in Coke's own hand remains among the Holkham MSS. It is appended to a copy of the Judge's letter. He has written at the top of the letter:

> "The lre. subscribed by all the Judges in answer to the K. concerning a commadm^{t} [*sic*] signified by Bacon, Attorney."

And at the bottom:

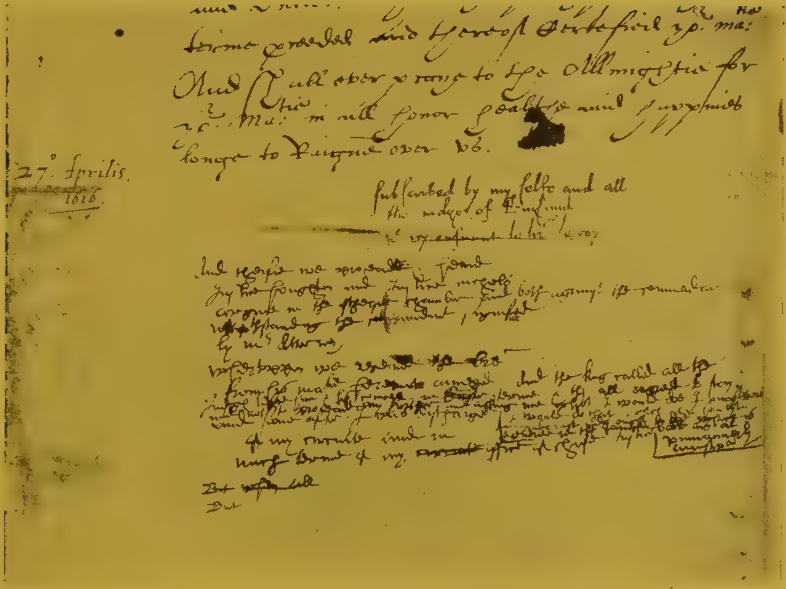
> "Subscribed by myself and all the Judges of England, v. icy ensuant la lre. du roy."

The King's letter is not annotated by Coke, but in one of his worst scrawls—when he would, he could write so beautiful a hand—he has added at the foot of the page which contains the Judge's letter:

> "And therefore we proceeded, and heard Justice Haughton and Justice Nichols argue in the Exchequer Chamber, and both against the commendams, notwithstanding the commandment signified by Mr. Attorney.
>
> "Whereupon we receved the lre. from his ma^{tie} hereunto annexed and the King called all the Judges before him and the Councell in Easter terme, and they all agreed to stay and not proceed any further, and asking me what I would doe, I answered I would do that which an honest and just Judge ought to doe which is entred in the Councell book as an unmannerly answer, and soon after I was discharged of my Circuit and in Mich. terme of my office as Cheafe Justice."

Lord Campbell aptly describes this as a "simple and sublime answer."

To the laconic reference to this dismissal in the paper entitled "Degrees and Proceedings of Sir Edw. Coke" he has added in his own hand: "This discharge was procured by the



terme generall and thereof certefied yo. ma:
And I shall ever pray to the Allmightie for
yo. Ma: in all honor healthe and happines
longe to Reigne over us.

27° Aprilis 1616.

Subscribed by my selfe and all
the Judges of England

FACSIMILE OF COKE'S "ANSWER TO THE KING" IN HIS OWN HANDWRITING. (See opposite page.)

Holkham MSS.

FRANCIS BACON.

importunitie and labor of Egerton lo. Chancellor and Bacon attorney." Times were changed since Coke dined twice in one week with Egerton, and sent him those fine salmon (page 22).

The blow was terrible, and his many enemies and detractors delighted to observe that it prostrated him for a time. Bacon pursued his triumphs ruthlessly; his letters to the King about his rival are charged with venom. But the Queen remained his friend, and it was probably through her influence that he was able to chronicle that "In the same year after his discharge (the Treasurership of England being voide) the King appointed him, together with the Lo. Archbishop of Canterbury, and others, to be Commissioner of the Treasury wherein he spent much tyme in often sitting about the execution thereof." He notes, too, that he was appointed to a Committee of the Privy Council for regulation of Allom and Saltpeter and for alienation of land-holdings; and that by Queen Anne he was appointed Justice in Eire of her Forests, Chases and Parks, and that after her death (March, 1618) the King appointed him Commissioner, with the Lord Privy Seal and Lord Digby, "to receive and Inventory all the Jewels, Plate, and Stuffe of the said Queene, and to cause the same to be valued by skilful men, which was done, amounting to a very great value."

There is little doubt that had it not been for the persevering arts of Bacon, Edward Coke would have remained Chief Justice and perhaps become Chancellor. Those who have had no legal training cannot appreciate the magnitude of Edward Coke's services to the Law; they must be content to believe what eminent lawyers have said about the most illustrious of their brethren. For instance, they must bow to my Lord Campbell (see page 31) or to my Lord Birkenhead who says: "Of all the long line of Judges who have rendered England famous among the nations for the excellence and impartiality of the administration of Justice, the chief place has been unhesitatingly awarded to Coke." And Lord Birkenhead, who admires dignified English prose, might have added that in his sonorous sentences, the Chief Justice follows in the great tradition of the sixteenth century.

Here is a passage from the Epilogue to his "Institutes":

> "And you, honourable and reverend Judges and Justices, that do, or shall, sit in the High Tribunals or Seats of Justice, as aforesaid,

feare not to do right to all, and to deliver your opinions justly according to the Law; for feare is nothing but a betraying of the succours that reason shall afford, and if you shall sincerely execute justice, be assured of three things: First, though some may maligne you, yet God will give you his blessing. Secondly, that though you may offend Great men and Favourites, yet you shall have the favourable kindness of the Almighty, and be his Favourites, against all scandalous complaints and pragmaticall devices. And, lastly, that in so doing, God will defend you as with a shield, for 'thou, Lord, will give a blessing unto the righteous, and with thy favourable kindness wilt thou defend him as with a shield.'"

His religion has been stigmatised as "narrow," and he is described as a fanatical puritan. I do not agree. His constant reliance on, and veneration for, the law of God as before everything else is very marked. I believe him to have been a sincerely religious and devout man of what is called the "old High Church" school.

His fairest hopes blighted, his career as a Judge over, in his sixty-fifth year Coke's strong sense of duty sustained him; he then began that career as a statesman for which England owes him as great a debt as for the services he rendered to the Law.

CHAPTER VI

EDWARD COKE, EX-CHIEF JUSTICE—SENT TO THE TOWER

BACON'S hopes of the Chancellorship were crowned with success in 1617, yet he could still stoop to employ every kind of discreditable means to compass the further abasement of his rival Coke. Not content with insulting him by letters and uninvited advice, he began to prosecute him in the Star Chamber, hoping that imprisonment and some tremendous fine would complete the ex-Chief Justice's ruin. But Coke, instigated by his friend Secretary Winwood, devised a plan which came very near to the undoing of Bacon. The plan was to win back the favour of the all-powerful Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, by marrying Frances, the young daughter of Edward Coke and Lady Elizabeth, who would have considerable wealth, to Sir John Villiers, Buckingham's impecunious elder brother. Lady Elizabeth had behaved disgracefully during the worst period of her husband's troubles, never going near him, and "looting" all she could from Stoke and Hatton House, so she was not told of the proposal until it had been made and accepted. She was furious and declared it should not be; she carried off her daughter and secreted her in a house near Weybridge. Sir Edward discovering their retreat forcibly regained custody of the girl. Lady Elizabeth replied, with Bacon's help, by prosecuting Sir Edward for his violent entry at Weybridge. Bacon then made a false move. He wrote to Buckingham, strongly dissuading him from forwarding his brother's match with Frances Coke, and to the King, representing that if the least encouragement were given to Coke, the old troubles would begin again. Buckingham thought him impertinent and replied very sharply, while the King held language to him of a truly alarming character. Bacon was in danger of finding himself dismissed from the Chancellorship, and seeing it bestowed on Coke. He executed a *volte-face* without losing a moment, dropped his prosecution, said he would do all he could to promote the match and, Sir Edward having arrested his wife on a charge of plotting to "cause a breach of the peace" by another attempt to abduct her daughter, Bacon saw that Lady Elizabeth was kept in confinement till she gave her consent. The favourite was mollified and the danger averted. The marriage was celebrated with great pomp in the presence of the King and Queen, but Sir Edward did not permit his wife to be present. Presently she took her revenge, a feminine revenge, when, on being restored to Court favour, she gave a feast at Hatton House to the King and Queen, and did not invite her husband.

Here it may be said that Sir John Villiers was created Viscount Purbeck, but the marriage turned out as unhappily as that of Lady Purbeck's parents. Stoke and other fine properties were settled on her, and she might have lived as a respectable and wealthy peeress. But she ran away with a lover, Sir Robert Howard, and her career seems to have been one of dissipation and disorder. There is a story that once she was sentenced to stand in a white sheet, as an adulteress, in the Savoy Church. But there is another that she repented, and used to stay with her old father at Stoke in his declining years. She died at Oxford, and was buried in St. Mary's, in 1645.

Sir Edward's hopes of reinstatement in the King's favour, by means of Buckingham, were not realised. He lived quietly at Stoke, occupied with his "Reports" and his "Institutes." Bacon now tried to conciliate him, and sent him a present of his newly published "Instauratio Magna," but Coke was not to be appeased even by such a book, and gratified his feelings by inscribing spiteful doggerel verses on the title-page. The volume, which is at Holkham now, is handsomely bound in fine vellum with a great gold boar, the Bacon crest, on each cover. On the title-page may be read "Edw. ex dono authoris" —he has inadvertently omitted his surname—and underneath:

"Authori consilium.
Instaurare paras veterũ documenta sophorum,
Instaura leges, Justiciamq prius";

which may be translated: "Advice to the Author: You make ready to set forth the writings of the wise men of old: Set forth the laws and justice first."

Lower down:

> "It deserveth not to be read in Schooles,
> but to be fraughted in the ship of fooles."

No doubt this was not in very good taste.

In 1621 a new Parliament was called and Sir Edward chronicles that he was

> "Elected one of the burgesses of Liscard in Cornwall by the King's commandment."

At once he began to make his weight felt, by moving as an amendment to a motion for Supplies, that Supply and Grievances should be referred to a Committee of the whole House. This was carried without a division, and Coke became Chairman of the Committee which proceeded to deal with grievances, specially that of "monopolies" by which money was irregularly raised by the King. He declined, however, to be Chairman of the body which was appointed to inquire into the corruption alleged against Lord Chancellor Bacon.

"Every schoolboy knows" that Bacon was impeached, pleaded guilty to bribery, was dismissed and sentenced to a fine and imprisonment. The King was lenient and let him off lightly. But now Bacon could trouble his great enemy Coke no more.

The King must soon have repented of bringing the old man into the House of Commons. He violently resented the independent line that Coke was taking up there, especially objecting to his "Protestation" against the royal view that the privileges of the House of Commons were derived from the King at his pleasure. The Protestation begins: "That the liberties franchises, privileges and jurisdictions of Parliament, are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England, etc." On its author's motion it was adopted by the House and entered in the Journals. It cost Coke his liberty for a time, for he was sent to the Tower.

Of this imprisonment he caused two accounts to be made by a clerk, both of which he revised and to which he himself added notes, not always easy to decipher. Various trivial charges were trumped up against him, and he adds to the more formal of the two accounts that "none of his counsell might have conference with him unless Heneage Finch the Recorder was present." The interpolations in brackets are in Sir Edward's own hand.

"On St. John's day in the nyneteenth yeare of King James, Anno dom. 1621, Sir Edward Coke, Knight (late Chief Justice of England), being a member of the house of Commons was by the bodie of this Counsell by the King's Comandement comitted close prisoner in the Tower of London (26 weekes and 5 dayes) of whom Owen the poett[1] made these verses:

> Dilecto sacra discipulo ter nona decembris
> mandavit turri te memoranda dies
>
> Innocuos inter pueros stephanumq Fidelem
> proxime martiribus quam prope martir eras."

And again these verses in the name of Sir Edward:

> "Clausus eram turri magna stipante caterva,
> mente fui liber, corpore captus eram,
>
> Corpore captus eram justo et privatus honore
> Et mihi pro magno munere turris erat."

"While he was close prisoner in the Tower by the merciful goodness of Almightie God and the Justice of his cause he had seaven great deliveryes and acquittals."

Of these, the seventh is the most interesting:

7. "Seventhly, the studio and houses of the said Sr. Edward (were sealed up by the councell's commandement) and after (his) books and papers were searched by Sir Robt. Cotton and Sr. Thomas Wilson (by order from the Councell) they could find no matter in any of them to touch the said Sr. Edward (and so they certified the Councell) but they carried away manuscripts (which he for his better instruction had carefully and in many years collected) whereof were after restored but 35, so as Sr. Edward lost many manuscripts of very great importance to him, althoughe he often complayned of the same."

At the foot of the sheet on which these notes are written, Sir Edward has added, entirely in his own hand:

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[1] John Owen (1560?-1622), epigrammatist. Many editions of his Epigrams were published, and English, French, German, and Spanish translations have appeared. [D. N. B.]

> "The verses which Sir Edward made while he was in the Tower, having but a cole to write the same."

The verses are Latin elegiacs, but they would not have been "sent up for good," sixty years before, at Norwich School; they begin:

> "Heu, fuge crudelem turrim, fuge littus amarum,
> Oĩa (omnia) deterrent, horridus ille locus."

Then he describes the damp, the stink, the roaring of the lions, and concludes pathetically:

> "Det mihi nosse deus que sint stata tempora turris,
> Ut me habeat Godwick, parvula villa Dei."

Twenty-five years of wealth and splendour marred by his domestic infelicities, of the storm and stress of public life poisoned by the malice of his enemies—twenty-five years had passed since he built his modest home at Godwick, hard by his birthplace, and spent happy summers there with Bridget and his children. Now, "close prisoner in the Tower," his thoughts turn to the peaceful retirement of that Norfolk hamlet, and, remembering what he can of his Latin verse-making at Norwich School, he prays that God will allow him to end his days at Godwick.

"I knew the verses were not good," said Dr. Johnson of the prayer in metrical Latin which he made when stricken with paralysis; and perhaps Sir Edward knew that his lines were not good but thought that the fact that he was able to make them at all, having nothing but a "cole" with which to write them down, justified his transmission of them to his posterity. That he believed himself to be in some danger of the block and the axe may be gathered from his reply to King James's insulting message that he might have the aid of some skilful counsel to help in his defence:

> "I know myself to be accounted to have as much skill in the Law as any man in England and therefore need no such help; I know his Majesty may easily find a pretence whereby to take away my head; but against this it matters not what may be said."

CHAPTER VII

EDWARD COKE, EX-CHIEF JUSTICE—LAST YEARS OF A GREAT STATESMAN

SIR EDWARD'S head was left upon his shoulders; he was allowed to have books, and he went on with his famous commentary on Littleton's "Tenures," and other such delightful toil. After he was released (in August, 1622), a plan was broached by the Court party to get rid of this dangerous old Radical by sending him on a Commission to inquire into the state of Ireland. He checkmated this by a grim announcement that "he hoped to discover and rectify many abuses in Ireland." Such an alarming prospect induced King James to keep him in England as the lesser of two evils.

Presently (1624) he was "elected for the Cittie and Countie of Coventry, to serve in that parliament at which many notable and profitable statutes for the whole comon. wealth were enacted." He does not mention that now he took the lead in the successful impeachment of the Earl of Middlesex, who had been one of his Judges in the Tower. But he is careful to record how "he was one of the Governors of Sutton's hospital [the Charterhouse] named and specially trusted by the founder himself; and when the case was adjudged for the hospitall. . . . Sir Edw: reported the case in print, and after, was a great meane for a private Acte of pliament of 3 Car. for establishment of the hospitall and restraint of the Governors from alienasion. . . ." Charterhouse owes him more, perhaps, than its gown-boys are aware of.

In 1625 King James died, and King Charles sought to keep so masterful an opponent out of the House by nominating him Sheriff for Bucks, for, during his Shrievalty, he would be unable to sit in Parliament. He tried to escape the unwelcome office, but, finding this impossible, he carried out his duties very handsomely. He, who had been Lord Chief Justice of England, riding out with a great retinue to receive the Puisne Judges and attending on them in court, a white wand of office in his hand.

Mr. Cuthbert Johnson's view of Sir Edward at this time is so just, that it deserves quotation ("Life of Sir Edward Coke," vol. ii., p. 142):

> "He was now in his 75th year. At an age when the wealthy of his time of life are usually timid, and opponents of change, he was leading on the Reformers of his day with all the gallant buoyancy of youth: his love of liberty, and evenhanded justice, shone as brightly as it did, twenty years previously, when he first ascended the seat of judgment. He was still labouring for his country with an energy which never flagged. . . ."

But his private detractors were as busy as his royal and political opponents. In the British Museum there is a manuscript copy of a scurrilous poem about Sir Edward and this very Sheriffdom. Impartiality suggests the quotation of a few lines:

"There was some pollicie, I doe believe,
Out of an ould, cast Judge to make a Sheriff.
For he of law so long had been a pedlar,
That he was nowe as ripe as any medlar.

. . . .

"But bear it bravely, that it may be spoke,
How bountiful a house is kept at Stoke,
For all the people praieth for yr. health,
As being Patron of the Commonwealth.

. . . .

"Now when you ride among your feathered troop
Shew yourself curteous, to each man stoop,
Give largely to the poor, that through the Countie
Each man may freely speak of your great bountie."

The author of these doggerel lines was evidently one of those who sought to broadcast the legend that Sir Edward was both arrogant and stingy. Probably he had not been invited to such fine dinner-parties as those to which Sir James Whitelocke was bidden.

The "Degrees and Proceedings" continue:

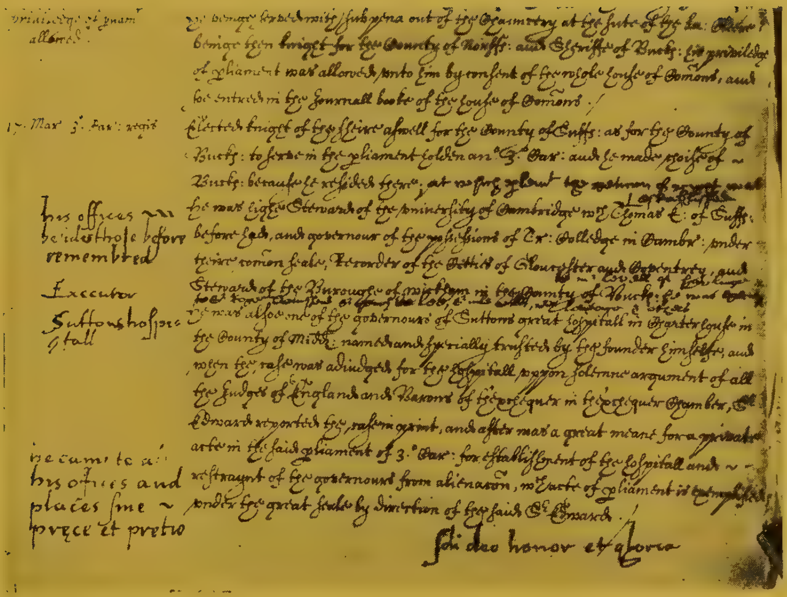
> "17 March, 3 Car. regis. Elected Knight of the Shire for the County of Suff., as for the County of Bucks, because he resided there (at which parliament the peticõn of right was carried)."

This famous Petition, a second Magna Charta, was Coke's last and greatest achievement. King Charles resorted to all kinds of irregular and illegal means for raising money, and threatened (though the Parliament was not to think it a threat, "for I scorn to threaten any but my equals") that if his required supply were refused, "he must use other means." Sir Edward's reply was to frame the Petition which, when it was become an Act of Parliament, should protect the people once and for all from forced loans and benevolences, arbitrary imprisonment and other grievances. He would cheerfully vote for supplies when necessary, he said, but grievances must be redressed first.

The King, guided by Buckingham, did his best to avoid agreeing to the Petition. Stormy debates took place in the House of Commons and the Speaker announced that it was forbidden to refer to any Minister of State by name. The name of Buckingham, the King's most evil Counsellor, was on every member's lips, but none dared utter it, until old Sir Edward (he was seventy-seven), declaring that he knew not if he should ever speak in that place again, did so dare. "I think the Duke of Buckingham is the cause of all our miseries . . . that he is the Grievance of Grievances. . . . It is not the King, but the Duke." The House was thrilled, and resounded with cheers, and cries of "'Tis he, 'tis he!" Rushworth the historian, who described the scene, added, "This was entertained and answered with a full acclamation of the House, as when one good hound recovers the scent, the rest come on in full cry."

Sir Edward may well have felt that his duty as champion of the lawful rights of his countrymen was now done. He could retire from active labour in Parliament with a good conscience. As an epilogue to the oft-quoted list of his "Degrees and Proceedings" he has added, in his best hand, "he came to all his offices and places sine prece et pretio. Soli deo honor et gloria." No one has ever denied that this claim was just.

For the remaining six years of his life he lived at Stoke (the house was that immortalised by Thomas Gray in his "Long Story"), occupied with revisions of his "Littleton" and further volumes of his "Institutes." The composition of these works involved him in unremitting labour. In a pleasant passage he admits it was not all enjoyment:



priviledg: of parliament allowed.

he beinge served with subpena out of the Chauncery at the suite of the la: [illegible] beinge then knight for the County of Norff: and Sheriffe of Buck: the priviledge of parliament was allowed unto him by consent of the whole house of Comons, and the entred in the Journall booke of the house of Comons ./

17. Mar 3°. Car: regis

Elected knight of the Shire aswell for the County of Suff: as for the County of Buck: to serve in the parliament holden an° 3° Car: and he made choise of ~ Buck: because he resided there; at which parliament [illegible]

his offices and besides those before remembred

he was high Steward of the universitye of Cambridge wth Thomas E: of Suff: before him, and governour of the possessions of Chr: Colledge in Cambr: under their comon seale, Recorder of the Citties of Glocester and Coventry, and Steward of the Burroughe of [illegible] in the County of Buck: he was [illegible]

Executor

Suttons hospitall

he was also one of the governours of Suttons great hospitall in Charterhouse in the County of Midd: named and specially trusted by the founder himselfe, and when the case was adiudged for the hospitall uppon solemne argument of all the Judges of England and Barons of the Exchequer in the Exchequer Chamber, Sr Edward reported the case in print, and after was a great meane for a private acte in the said parliament of 3.° Car: for establishment of the hospitall and ~ restraynt of the governours from alienation, wch acte of parliament is exemplified under the great seale by direction of the said Sr Edward ./

he came to all his offices and places sine ~ prece et pretio

Soli deo honor et gloria

SIR EDWARD COKE'S ANNOTATIONS AND EPILOGUE TO THE LIST OF HIS "DEGREES AND PROCEEDINGS."

Sine prece et pretio = Without begging and bribery.
Soli Deo honor et gloria = To God alone be the honour and glory.

STOKE HOUSE, SIR EDWARD COKE'S HOME IN HIS LATER YEARS.

The Church is the scene of Gray's "Elegy."

From R. Bentley's Illustrations to Gray's Poems (1753).

> "Whilst we were in hand with these four parts of the Institutes, we often having occasion to go into the city, and then into the country, did in some sort envy the state of the honest ploughman and other mechanics; for one, when at his work, would merrily sing, and the ploughmen whistle some self-pleasing tune, and yet their work both proceeded and succeeded; but he that takes upon him to write, doth captivate all the faculties and powers both of his mind and body, and must be only attentive to that which he collecteth, without any expression of joy or cheerfulness whilst he is at work."

His wife had by this time ceased to live with him, but his two daughters and his sons and their wives were doubtless good to the old man, and I think that the poor naughty daughter, Frances Purbeck, sometimes stayed with him. Of friends he had many, and I am sure they were friends worth having, for a man like Sir Edward, not agreeable or attractive to everybody, wins the friendship of only the very nicest people.

Strong though he was, he was once so ill that a rumour reached London that he was dead; Lady Elizabeth set out at once to take possession of Stoke, but was met, half-way, by the mortifying news that he was recovering. The account he himself gave of a serious accident shows that the hardiness of constitution conspicuous in his descendants of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries may be inherited from him:

> "The 3rd May, 1632, riding in the morning at Stoke, between eight and nine o'clock to take the air, my horse under me had a strange tumble backwards, and fell upon me (being above eighty years old) where my head lighted near to sharp stubbles, and the heavy horse upon me. And yet by the providence of Almighty God, though I was in the greatest danger, yet I had not the least hurt, nay, no hurt at all. For Almighty God saith by his prophet David 'the angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them; sit nomen Domini benedictum, for it was his work.'"

So he drew nearer to death, but refused the aid of medical men to keep him alive. Mr. Mead wrote to Sir Martin Stuteville about this:

> "Sir Edward Coke being now very infirm in body, a friend of his sent him two or three doctors to regulate his health, whom he told that he had never taken physic since he was born, and would not now begin; and that he had now upon him a disease which all the drugs of Asia, the Gold of Africa, nor all the doctors of Europe could cure—old age. He therefore both thanked them and his friend that sent them, and dismissed them nobly with a reward of twenty pieces to each man."

But his copy of Thomas Paynell's "Regiment of Health" is now at Holkham to show that he had studied that famous book of "Domestic Medicine." He has made notes in it, and amused himself by turning some of its rhyming Latin prescriptions into English. Thus:

"If physicke fayle
For thy advayle,
Three Doctors you shall find,
Doctor due diet
And Doctor Quiet,
And Doctor merry-mynde."

* * * *

Life ebbed out peacefully enough, for he was troubled by no pulse-feeling doctors or nurses with their hourly potions. But the inveteracy of his enemies at Court could not respect even a death-bed. He may have been unconscious—I hope he was—when Sir Francis Windebank came to Stoke, with an Order of Council to search for "Seditious and dangerous papers," and took away "Coke's Comment upon Littleton written with his own hand," and, as Roger Coke, his grandson, believed, "51 other MSS." This was not the first time that his house had been searched, and papers taken away (see page 40). Roger further says that, in 1641, such of these MSS. as could be found were delivered up to Sir Robert, the ex-Chief Justice's eldest son, but he does not say how many were found. We know from papers collected by Archbishop Tenison, which are now at Lambeth, that besides the more valuable papers carried off by Windebank, there were many others seized and examined together with various "antiquities and rarities";[1] these were contained in a trunk which was "taken from Sir Edward Coke's servant Pepys (Pepys was his most confidential man of business, and a kinsman of Sir Edward's daughter-in-law Meriel, wife of John Coke, the fourth son) and brought to Bagshot, "by his Majestie's commandement, and then broken up." A list of the articles contained in the trunk is given in a manuscript volume formerly Archbishop Laud's, now at Lambeth. None of them appear to have returned into the hands of the Cokes.

Sir Edward may have been harsh, and arrogant, perhaps,

[1] For these "rarities," see Appendix V.

to some people, and difficult to get on with. Historians of our time dislike him so much that when they must give him praise, they give it grudgingly. Macaulay, speaking of his refusal to preside over the enquiry into the corruption alleged against his rival Francis Bacon, says: "For the first time in his life, Coke behaved like a gentleman." Spedding, in his Life of Bacon, calls him "the most offensive of Attorney-Generals," but has to admit that he became "the most admired and venerated of Judges." Mr. S. R. Gardiner, strongly biassed in favour of Bacon, loses no opportunity of reviling Coke. He speaks of his violent temper, his arrogance, the narrowness of his intellect, his ignorance of human nature, his crabbed and uncouth personality. Yet even he has to allow that, though not a statesman, "the great lawyer was in reality fighting for something quite as valuable as anything the highest statesmanship could give," and concludes, "the sympathies of posterity have been with Coke, not Bacon."

But against all the vituperation cast upon Coke, let us put the testimony of Whitelocke, who knew him well, that "Never was man so just, so upright, so free from corruption as he was. Courteous to great and small, and the most religious and orderly man in his house that lived in our state."

It is true that he spat out "Viper" and other hard names to Walter Raleigh, but the cause of his violence and brutality was his horror of what he believed to be treason and rebellion. Mr. Birrell has pointed out that even noble-minded John Milton applied to his opponents such ugly words as "numskull, beast, fool, puppy, knave, ass, and mongrel-cur." Nor was Thomas Carlyle always quite polite in his language. I do not think it can be doubted that Edward Coke was a good and religious man at heart. He lived in an age when men were fierce, and customs cruel, and he must be judged accordingly.

The British Museum (Add. MSS. 22, 591) has a copy, pathetic in its interest, of

> "The Foundation of Ye Faith of Sir Edw. Coke, all written with his owne hands in the extremitye of his last sickness, IX June, 1634."

The old man concludes his profession thus:

> "Lastly, the Holy Scripture . . . hath testified that Jesus Christ is the Rocke—and not only the Redeemer of all menne, but my Redeemer,

and of his free mercie hath shewed mee . . . infinite blessings both outward and inward; and that all my long life I have had the seale of the blessed Sacrament of his bodye and blood so often conferred to mee, to persuade mee of his Grace and favour to mee.

"The God of all consolation and comforte. . . . Give mee in myne olde and weake age a strong faith, and patience, together with the testimony of a Good Conscience to the end . . . against the temptations and fyery dartes of the enemye. Soe, deare God, I believe, O, merciful God, of thy Grace and mercie, help the weakness of my faith, Amen, Amen."

Too much reliance need not be placed on the testimony of gossips and letter-writers as to the personal character of public men whom they disliked, perhaps, or of whom they were envious. Nor is it wise to take for gospel the panegyrics of devoted friends or dependants. But there is doubtless a good deal of truth in the eulogy passed on Sir Edward Coke in a curious "elegy" by Mr. Robert Codrington, Master of Arts, which was dedicated by that worthy poet to Mrs. Anne Sadleir, the Chief Justice's elder daughter (British Museum, Add. MSS. 37, 484). This begins with an "Acrostic both quaint and ingenious":

"E yes, weepe your last, but ere the teares you shedde
D rowne your oppress and darkened sences, Reade
W hose sacred Dusts these are, even Envy sadde
A dmires these mighty Ruines, never hadde
R ich soule a nobler lodging, or exprest
D istincter worth, never a purer brest

L earning inspired, or to whose happy store
O ur English Lawes have been indebted more:
R aised high as heav'n they seate him, then let none
D are to confine him to this marble stone.

C elestial roomes containe his honoured soule,
O ur brests his tombe, the Lawes his fame inroule,
K now his high worth, whose needles Grave shall round
E nriched with laurells, and with palmes be crowned."

Mr. Codrington gives a very different portrait of Sir Edward from that which represents him as grasping, arrogant, miserly and eaten up by ambition:

"Riches are tempting guifts, and oftentimes
Prove not their owners' credits, but their crimes—
'Twas not in new inventions of expence
To mix more riches with magnificence,

'Twas not in titles, greatness, nor in blood,
Wherein he plac'd the centre of his good,
But in the practice of a noble mind,
To the perfections of all worth inclin'd—
Whose vertues did theyre habits manifest
So cleere, that never they were seene to rest,

Nor any of them was e'er seene to lurke
Or mootch away, whiles that the rest did worke—
For though all vertues in their severall wayes
Fetch the discent of their illustrious rayes
And pedigree from Heav'n, yet none doth fly
More high, or neare it, than doth Charity,
Nor any vertue can be understood
To be a nearer cosin unto God. . . .
Nor did he feele his Age a dull disease
That barred him from the due performances
Of Holy workes, but made with doubled pace
The Staffe of Age to bee the Speed to Grace,
For Age, though Crooked, is of heav'nly kind,
And best doth serve to rectify the mind
With saving precepts, they most light doe climbe
The hille of Heav'n that feele the weight of time."

Sir Edward died on September 4, 1634. He was buried a month after, in Tittleshall Church on the south side of the high altar, where his executors, of whom his friends Sir Thomas Coventry and Sir Ranulph Crewe and Mr. Pepys were the principal, raised a very elaborate monument to his memory, designed by the famous statuary Nicholas Stone. The cost of it was £400, but Stone paid his assistant, John Hargrave, who carved the fine recumbent figure of Sir Edward, only £15. I should like to know who was the scholar who wrote the Latin inscription, which begins in Roman fashion, "Deo optimo Maximo," and contains such rare words as "promi-condus" and "madidoculus."

The funeral obsequies were doubtless celebrated with becoming pomp, and it would be a great day for Tittleshall and the surrounding villages. The children of the gossips who had marvelled at that portentous birth at Mileham, eighty-two years before, would renew the tale their mothers had taught them, and all who knew Sir Edward as father, friend, landlord, as well as Judge and statesman, would agree that a great man, not without many faults, but a good man, too, was gone to his rest.

CHAPTER VIII

ANNE COKE, MRS. SADLEIR OF STANDON LORDSHIP

(Born at Huntingfield, 1584; married, 1601, to Ralph Sadleir, Esq.; died, between October, 1670, and March, 1671.)

NOW, let us see something of the fortunes of that fine family which was born to Edward Coke and Bridget Paston. Ladies should come first, and as the first of the daughters to grow up was Anne, her story shall begin the tale.

Her father has noted that at the time of her birth the moon was in Cancer, and that it was St. David's Day. Whether it were owing to the influence of Luna or the Saint, the child grew up to be a woman of strong character and remarkable individuality. Throughout her life she loved and venerated her father. It was to her house at Standon that he retired when dismissed from his high office. We have seen her as a maiden of thirteen accompanying her mother from London to Godwick, giving a shilling to the poor prisoners at Norwich, and playing cards at Mr. Gawdy's house. Then we lose sight of her until September 13, 1601, when she is married to Ralph, son of Sir Thomas Sadleir, grandson of the celebrated Sir Ralph Sadleir, and goes to live at Standon Lordship in Hertfordshire. Chamberlain wrote to Mr. Dudley Carleton that "Mr. Atturney had married his daughter at London to Sir Thomas Sadleir's sonne . . . with whom he gave £3000, and furnished the feast with all magnificence. The plate given by Friends to the bride was above £800."

Anne was a remarkable woman; kind, generous, decided in opinions, vehement in expressing them, loyal, narrow-minded perhaps, a good hater, a Mrs. Battle playing the game of life with all seriousness.

It is her correspondence that reveals all this about her. Unlike some members of the Coke family who set little store on "documents," but like her father in his anxiety for the preservation of what he valued, she made a selection of letters written to her by several eminent divines, and other friends, added a few which, with rarely clear foresight, she thought would be found interesting in after years, and salted—or shall I say, peppered?—the whole with copies of the pungent replies which she could make to unsympathetic correspondents when her temper was roused. These, together with a manuscript book of religious reflections, interspersed with occasional notes as to family events, she sent before her death to the Library at Trinity College, Cambridge.

The first letter to be chosen from those written to Mrs. Sadleir shall be one from old Sir Ranulph Crewe, her father's close friend, one of his executors, and a trustee of his children; also a Chief Justice of England, and, like Sir Edward Coke, dismissed from office because he would not play the sycophant to an arbitrary King. He was Lord Campbell's "quiet, modest, unambitious man . . . a perfectly competent and honest Chief Justice." And he was "an old man eloquent." His noble language about ancient families, spoken during the trial concerning the succession to the family honours of the De Veres, can hardly be quoted too often:

> " . . . I suppose there is no man that hath any apprehension of gentry or nobleness, but his affection stands to the continuance of a house so illustrious, and would take hold of a twig or twine to uphold it. And yet Time hath his revolutions; there must be a period, and an end to all temporal things—finis rerum—an end of names and dignities, and whatsoever is terrene; and why not of De Vere? For where is Bohun? where is Mowbray? where is Mortimer? Nay, which is more and most of all, where is Plantagenet? They are entombed in the urns and sepulchres of mortality! Yet let the name of De Vere stand so long as it pleaseth God."

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The Civil War is raging in all its horror when Sir Ranulph writes to Mrs. Sadleir the first of the letters which she preserved. It is not dated, but was probably written in 1643, or early in 1644. His house, Crewe Hall, Cheshire, was garrisoned for the Parliament, taken, and retaken in 1643. The "Dictionary of National Biography" says he had bought Crewe Hall from Sir Edward Coke. If this be correct, the sale must have been before Sir Edward caused the great record of his possessions to be made.

"*From London, to my worthy coossin, Mistris Sadler, at Standon.*

"My deare Sadleir that thinks upon the cherishing of an ould man [he was nearly ninety when he died in 1646] full of dayes and infirmityes, these sad tymes be full of dangers . . . howbeitt the presse and prynt be Free, yett a Caveate is necessary, to silence the pens and restrayne the tounge; you are a great stranger to London; when Frends meete there is a Freedom to discourse moderately used; I am in a most beggarly condition, I have had no rent out of Chesshyre these four yeares, all my revenues spent by Kyng and Parlament, my house plundered and much defaced so that it was 500^{l} in money and furniture neerly 2000^{l} . . . besides the hurt my house receyved, my sonne John hath lost all he had, money, plate, bonds and furniture, his evidences all taken away, myne dispersed and many missing. The suspicions of Trechery of soome of my Lord Generall's com̃anders in the western army are in Examination, Botteler committed to the Tower. I see nothing but misery before me, the earth is stayned with blood, the Kingdom apparelled in a robe of blood, kyll and slay, robbery and rapine, and I cannot see so much as a glimpse of peace. In my Garden at Crewe when the Garrison was in my house, they kept oxen and kyne in itt, and defaced itt, yett my Gardiner cooming of late to London would needs have me buy soome Gileflower roots to take down with him—yf you can bestow upon me a doossen Good tulipe roots I will venture them into the countrey—I long to see you—God for his mercy's sake send us a sure peace, and a harty reconciliation.

"The Parlament forces are conceived to be strong, and are about to send propositions to the Kyng."

What a sad letter, but what a delightful old gentleman! In another letter he says: "I thank you for your comforts and refreshment, I conclude dynner and supper with itt. Remember your promise for Tulipps."

Mrs. Sadleir, then, must have been something of a gardener, as she had tulips to spare.

Two main principles governed her life—loyalty to the throne, and reverence for the Church of England. In spite of the unfair treatment of her honoured father by both King James and King Charles, she was a Royalist through and through, and the love for her Church, which she says she derived from her father, led her to seek the society of eminent divines, and to study serious books. She won the friendship and respect of some of the most eminent Churchmen of her time. And it is much to her credit and theirs that certain of these were her friends, for several did not take the same view of Church doctrine and polity as she did.

The first of those whom we meet in the correspondence is

Ralph Brownrigg, Bishop of Exeter.[1] He was something of a Calvinist—though he confessed that "he came to like the Liturgy better and better"—and Mrs. Sadleir was High Church; but she trusted him as a good and honourable man, in spite of his opinions. Master of St. Catharine's and Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University, he was sent to the Tower as a punishment for a Royalist sermon. He writes from the Tower, June 11, 1645:

> "The tediousness of my confinement hath been much taken off by the cheerfull and very ingenious Society of your worthy Brother [Sir Robert Coke], and I protest I love my restraint the better for the good occasion it hath ministred to me to be thought of by yourself."

She had sent him "bountiful testimonies" of her regard, and he assures her that "It is noe small recompense for my loss of libertie . . . that thereby I have gained the unexpected and undeserved accession of your favour and respect."

It seems that Mrs. Sadleir, when succouring her brother Robert, who sometimes "had not wherewithal to buy himself bread,"[2] had made the acquaintance of some of his fellow-prisoners.

Bishop Brownrigg plays a part in a certain transaction of great moment to all friends to ancient manuscripts. Mrs. Sadleir possessed two illuminated manuscripts of transcendent interest and value. How she came by them is a mystery which Trinity College and the Bodleian Library would be very glad to clear up. One of them is the splendid Apocalypse which is now one of the chief treasures of Trinity College, Cambridge. Dr. Montagu James says: "It is certainly one of the finest productions of English thirteenth-century art. It is probably the very finest of the important class to which it belongs, the illustrated manuscripts of the Apocalypse of St. John."

Mrs. Sadleir has written inside its cover:

> "I commit this booke to the custodie of the right Revd. Father in God, Raffe Lo: Bishop of Exon; when times are better settled (which

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[1] Ralph Brownrigg, born at Ipswich, 1592. Nominated Bishop of Exeter, 1641, but never occupied the See—"officiating as Master of," or Preacher to, the Temple, 1558 ("Inner Temple Records," vol. ii., pp. 368-380 CXXVIII.). Buried there, December 17, 1659.

[2] See *post,* p. 84.

God hasten) it is with my other books and my coines given to Trinitie Colledge Librarie in Cambridge, God in his good time restore her with her sister Oxford to their pristine happiness, the Vulgar People to there former obedience, and God bless and restore Charles the Second and make him like his most glorious Father. Amen. August the 20th, 1649."

Bishop Brownrigg died in 1659 ("strong fittes of the stone," says Fuller, "with dropsical inclinations and other distempers incident to plethoric bodies caused his death"), but he took care of the Apocalypse and had it transferred with another volume to Cambridge. For, on August 10, 1660, Doctor Henry Ferne,[1] the master, who was a very old personal friend, writes to Mrs. Sadleir for himself and his colleagues, their thanks for the Apocalypse "adorned everywhere with fair and richly drawn figures," and "the Book of Hours of the Blessed Virgin, richly bound and set with Jasper stones . . . we and posterity after us shall look upon them as Monuments of your Goodness and piety; as Conservatories of the honourable memory of your noble and renowned Father once a member of this College, ever after an honour to it."

Doctor Ferne was for some years Chaplain to some dear friends of Mrs. Sadleir—Arthur, Lord Capell (executed in 1649) and his wife. In a letter written in 1652, he tells Mrs. Sadleir he has known her "nigh 20 years," and he sends a message to "Your good sister Mrs. Skinner."

The fact that her father had been at Trinity College, and all her brothers at the University of Cambridge, doubtless determined Mrs. Sadleir to give her precious Apocalypse to Trinity. But, good, admirable woman, she did not overlook the claims of Sister Oxford, and she gave the second of her treasures to Bodley. This is a fine illuminated thirteenth-century Psalter, executed in Northern France, and marvellously bound in silver and enamel. It is now exhibited in one of the glass cases among the chief treasures of the Bodleian. The Summary Catalogue of Western MSS. says: "The Binding is rare and perhaps contemporary: the sides are composed of wood with facings or sheets of silver on which are engraved

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[1] Henry Ferne (1602-62), Royalist, pamphleteer, preacher. Chaplain to Lady Capell during the Commonwealth. Master of Trinity, 1660. Consecrated Bishop of Chester, February 9, 1661-62, and died five weeks afterwards.

(1) the Coronation of the Virgin, (2) the Annunciation. Colour is given to these by translucent enamel which leaves the faces white . . . the two scenes are framed in silver gilt borders of foliage, hand wrought. Owing to the intrinsic value of the materials used, comparatively few examples have escaped the melting-pot. Hence it is unusual to find so perfect an example of binding. . . ." The book, according to an inscription in it, was given by the great antiquary and bibliophile Sir Robert Cotton[1] to his friend the learned physician William Butler,[2] of Cambridge, in 1614, and in 1648 the "very noble Anne Sadleir" gave it to the Bodleian. (Did she buy it from Dr. Butler?)

Why Mrs. Sadleir gave this book at once to Bodley, while she entrusted her Apocalypse to Bishop Brownrigg "until better times," is something of a puzzle. It may be that her gift was meant as an immediate reward to Oxford for being so loyal to Charles I. But this very loyalty might have made Oxford an unsafe place, now that Puritans, who hated Mass books and the like, were become all-powerful. That Mrs. Sadleir sent the book direct we learn from a letter written by Mr. John Rous from "Oxon, From the Publique Library, Nov. 6 '49":

> ". . . Your Manuscript accompanyed with a paper written with your owne hand, which you were pleased to give to the publique Library, for which so noble a present I doe now in mine owne and the University's behalf return humble thanks. Had the University bene in its wonted calme condition you would have received long ere this more solemn thanks from a better hand. My worthy Friend and auncient Acquaintant [sic] Mr. Parsons, (by whose conveyance your present came to our hands) can assure you how kindly welcome it was to us, and how much we esteeme of it . . . might any good occasion drawe you

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[1] Sir Robert Cotton, antiquary, and collector of European reputation. He was a friend of Sir Edward Coke, and gave him the splendid copy, on large paper, of Milles' "Catalogue of Honour" (London: William Jaggard, 1610) which is now at Holkham.

[2] William Butler (1535-1618) attended Prince Henry in his last illness. The "Dictionary of National Biography" quotes Aubrey's story of Butler curing a patient of his ague by suddenly pitching him "a matter of 20 feet" into the Thames. The surprise absolutely cured him. This recipe for curing ague was followed by Rev. James Woodforde as late as 1779. See the delightful "Diary of a Country Parson" for May 23: "My boy Jack had another touch of the ague about noon. I gave him a dram of gin, and pushed him into one of my ponds . . . and he was better after it."

into these parts . . . I doubt not but you would behould your rich Jewell deposited among the Rarity of Kings and Queenes. . . ."[1]

Dear Mrs. Sadleir, had you but given your Apocalypse and your early French Psalter, and the book bound with jasper stones to your brother Robert with strict injunctions that they were to descend to the heir-male together with the Chief Justice's library, it is possible that they might now have been at Holkham. They would be well cared for, were they there; and yet, when I think that Mrs. Bedingfield's Prayer-Book, and so many other delightful volumes which the Chief Justice thought he had secured to his posterity, have disappeared owing to the carelessness of heirs-male, perhaps you were wise in giving your treasures to the safer custody of Bodley and Trinity. You had no high opinion of your brother John Coke and his children, you do not seem to have held your jovial brother Henry in any special esteem, you thought that "glorie departed from our poore family" with brother Robert's decease[2]—I understand your feelings, and think—yes, perhaps you were wise!

From the time when she got that shilling from her father to give to the poor prisoners at Norwich when she was a girl, and even earlier, very likely, Mrs. Sadleir loved giving. Depend upon it, she denied herself in order to render "comforts and refreshments" to deprived ministers, prisoners in the Tower, and such-like. And in 1662 she sends books and a noble portrait of her father to the Inner Temple. That honourable Society inclines to the pleasant belief that some of these books had been her father's. But I do not wish to think that she disobeyed her father's orders that his library was to be made an heirloom. Some of the law-books were perhaps duplicate copies belonging to him. The portrait is much finer than the full-length which has descended to Holkham, and the Benchers who are to be envied its possession, have kindly allowed a reproduction to be used as the Frontispiece to this book.

Mr. Heneage Finch,[3] Treasurer of the Inner Temple, thanks Mrs. Sadleir very charmingly for her gifts:

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[1] The Psalter had belonged to King Henry VIIth.

[2] See *post,* p. 84.

[3] Heneage Finch (1621-82), Lord Chancellor, 1674; Earl of Nottingham, 1681.

"*July* 15*th*, 1662.

"The honour you have done to this Society to enrich their Library with soe choice a collection of excellent bookes can never be sufficiently acknowledged. . . . The profession of the Law is so much indebted to the labours of my Lord Coke that he deserves a Statue, and wee of the Inner Temple were chiefly bound to erect it . . . therefore, we are bound to receive that picture your Lad[yship] hath sent us, with all the devotion imaginable, and to dispose it so as that it may be the dayly object of our students, who finding the immortall respects which are paid to the memory of that noble Person, may be inflamed with some kind of ambition to imitate him in his labours. . . . You have the honour of being our best benefactor . . . as we can never pretend to be Lawyers unless we remember my Lord Coke, soe it is not fit we should pretend to be Gentlemen, unless we remember his daughter, and pay to her memory the tribute of a perpetuall thanksgiving. . . ."

The Treasurer of the Temple, Mr. Richard Goddard, had previously thanked Mrs. Sadleir, on hearing, through Doctor Gauden[1] that she had the intention of leaving her library to the Society. He assures her that all care shall be taken to preserve her bounty to posterity and to improve "this your corner stone to the making of a usefull Library, to the glory of your Ladyshipp who hath laid the foundation."

Amiable Bishop King[2] of Chichester, friend of Izaak Walton, thanks Mrs. Sadleir for a present of venison; Bishop Hall of Norwich,[3] whom she describes, in 1656, as "our English Senaca" [*sic*], thanks her for "her noble remembrance of him"; Richard Holdsworth,[4] the famous Puritan preacher, writes from the Tower, 1645, to thank her for all her favours to him. But there is one letter from Mrs. Sadleir to "The Reverend and very much esteemed Dr. Person [*sic*],[5]

[1] John Gauden (1605-62), Royalist. Bishop of Exeter, 1660; of Worcester, 1662. Credited with the authorship of "The King's Book"—"Eikon Basilike."

[2] Henry King (1592-1669), Royalist. Rector of Petworth and Bishop of Chichester, 1641. Poet and friend of Donne.

[3] Joseph Hall (1574-1656), Bishop of Exeter, 1627; of Norwich, 1641. Sent to the Tower, 1641; his income sequestrated, and his goods distrained, the Commissioners "not leaving so much as a dozen trenchers, or the children's pictures."

[4] Richard Holdsworth (1590-1649), Master of Emmanuel; refused bishopric of Bristol. In the Tower, 1643-45. Owner of a valuable library.

[5] John Pearson (1613-86), Rector of North Creake. Presented by Henry Coke to Thorington, 1640; deprived, 1644. Sometime Chaplain to Sir Robert Coke, and George, Lord Berkeley (see *post*, p. 87).

Master of Trinity Colledge, in his absence, to my good cozen Dr. Nevil, Fellow of Trinitie," which shows that she was ready to receive favours in her turn.

It was in April, 1669, that she sent her bundle of letters and her book of devotional extracts "composed by myself in the time of my affliction" to Trinity, and she writes: "Sir, your predecessor Dr. Ferne of ever blessed memorie and my most dear friend, did, with the assistance of my good cozen Dr. Nevill, at my request make my cozen Wolfrone Stubbe fellow; if you will both joyne together to bestow a scollarship upon his brother Edm. Stubbe, this Easter, I shall take it for a verie great favour." One of her father's sisters had married a Stubbe; and she could call cousins *à la mode d'Ecosse* with the Nevils, for two daughters of her cousin Eleanor Paston, Countess of Rutland, married Nevils, Lords Westmoreland and Abergavenny.

Of Mrs. Sadleir's friends among the Bishops, enough has now been said. Her friend of friends appears to have been her neighbour at Hadham Hall, the Lady Capell, widow of that Arthur, Lord Capell, who was beheaded (March, 1649) for being an adherent of King Charles. Lady Capell (Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Sir Charles Morrison of Cassiobury) writes to her, while her husband is still alive:

"MY EVER HONOURED COSEN,

"You have my hearty prayers for increase of health, I assure you none wisheth it with more affection. I may truly say it is one of my great supporters now, in my sad disconsolate condition, (next under God's favour) the Comfort I receive from you and some other perticular friends. Methinks my usage is not much unlike the children of Israel under Pharoah; now, I have nothinge allowed me from my hard task-masters, I have been threatened to be putt out of this place, all my fifth part taken from me, I have received but one £30 since Micklemas to keep me and my children; and yet dayly I must pay the taxes. But I am not out of hope but that God will not suffer these wicked wretches allways to tryumphe. . . . I must tell you I have many comforts, and blesse my God for them, that it please God to blesse my deare lord with health and cheerfulness under his great burden: truely, I daresay if you saw him it would much cheere you. I thanke God my daughter Beauchamp goeth on the best with her Great Belly that ever I saw she hath been quicke this fortnight. . . . I shall send your kind token to my lord."

Master of Trinity, 1662. Bishop of Chester, 1673. Author of the famous "Pearson on the Creed."

Mrs. Sadleir dockets her packet, "my lord Capell the marter's letters." "My daughter Beauchamp" was wife to Lord Beauchamp, son of that Lord Hertford who had married Lady Arabella Stuart. She married, secondly, the first Duke of Beaufort.

No correspondent could be more courteous than Mrs. Sadleir, or more trenchant, when she had reason so to be.

I feel sure that as she wrote, so she spoke, knowing her own mind; an enemy to circumlocution, certainly a bitter foe to compromise, no friend to excuse. Mr. Peter Heylyn (1600-62),[1] a busy writer, and rather a pragmatical person, published in 1656, "Observations on Mr. Hamon L'Estrange's Life of Charles I." In 1659, he thanks Mrs. Sadleir for some information she had given him about her father and Lady Elizabeth Hatton, and about Sutton's hospital, and says he will make use of it. She is displeased with Mr. Heylyn, and preserves a copy of her reply to him, a letter in which she does not mince her words:

"Sir,

"After reading your short historie of King Charles of ever blessed memorie, you take notice of a speech of my brother Clement Coke in Parliament. He was a young man and overshote himself, yet I wish that had not come to pass, since that then was but a surmise. [Clement had said: "It is better to die by a foreign enemy than to be destroyed at home."] But your addition 'a true chip of the old block' was added in derision of my dear dead Father. Sir, if you had truely known him, you would have set a better character upon him, but those that takes things upon trust, seldom or never speaks or wrights truth. [Here follows a spirited defence of her father.] The first I remember that spake any ill of him (after he had lain some years quiet in his grave) was one Howell,[2] a mercinary fellow, in his speaking Grove and in his foolish Familiar Epistles, in both of which he makes himself soe ridiculous, that all that reads them laughs at them. . . . It is the nature of dogges, if one bark, all will bark too . . . of you, Sir,

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[1] The "Dictionary of National Biography" says that Peter Heylyn, before he rented Lucy's Court, Abingdon (from whence he writes this letter), lived at Minster Lovel, "the seat of his elder brother who rented it from his Nephew." But the estate of Minster Lovel was the property of Sir Edward Coke, and belonged, in the year 1559, to his son John, who at that time held the grand estate of the family.

[2] James Howell (1594 ?-1666), the famous author of "Dodona's Grove" and "Epistolæ Ho—Elianæ; or Familiar Letters," had sought the favour of Cromwell, and was therefore obnoxious to Mrs. Sadleir.

I beg this favour that you will not molest the dead, which if you will doe, I shall willingly wright myself your assured friend.

"ANNE SADLEIR."

James Howell's "Familiar Letters" was one of Thackeray's favourite books for reading in bed, and indeed it may well be true, though not in dear Mrs. Sadleir's sense, that anyone who reads them must laugh, for they are very entertaining.

The correspondent with whom Mrs. Sadleir deals most faithfully is that "Apostle of Toleration and Liberty of Conscience," Mr. Roger Williams, about whom a great deal has been written by American historians. Milton praised him for an extraordinary man, but, on the other hand, his book claiming liberty of conscience, "The Bloudy Tenant of Persecution" (1644), was ordered by the House of Commons to be burnt.

Mrs. Sadleir has written on the back of one of his letters: "This Roger Williams when he was a youth would in a shorthand take sermons, and speeches in the Star Chamber, and present them to my dear Father; he, seeing him so hopefull a youth, took such liking to him, that he put him into Sutton's Hospitall [the Charterhouse] and he was the 2nd that was placed there: full little did he think he would have proved such a reble to God, the King, and his Country. I have his letters, that if ever he has the face to return into his native Country, Tyburn may give him welcome."

Mr. Williams, having embraced anti-Church and anti-Royalist opinions, made his way to New England, and no doubt Mrs. Sadleir thought him a good riddance, and that there was an end of him. She must have been surprised and annoyed to receive the following undated letter from him (it must have been written in 1651): "From my lodging in St. Martin's near the Shambles, at Mr. Davis his house, a shoemaker, at the syne of the Swan."

The renegade has returned to England, then, was living with a shoemaker, a Radical shoemaker, and he dares to worry Mrs. Sadleir with his pernicious opinions.

"MADAM,

"The never dying honour and Respect which I owe to that dear and honourable Roote and his branches . . . [he means Chief Justice Coke and his children] . . . have emboldened me once more to enquire after your deare Husband and youre Life and Health. This last winter I landed once more in my native Country, being sent over from some parte of New England with some addresses to your Parliament. . . . That Man of Honour and Wisdom and Pietie your dear Father was often pleased to call me his son, and truely it was as bitter as Death to me when Bishop Laud pursued me out of this Land, and my Conscience was persuaded against the Nationall Church, Ceremonies, and Bishops, beyond the conscience of your deare Father—I say it was as bitter as Death to me when I rode Windsor way to take ship at Bristowe, and saw Stoke House where that blessed man was, and I then durst not acquaint him with my Conscience and my Flight. . . . I confess I have many adversaries, and also many Friends, and divers eminent. It hath pleased your Generall himselfe to send for me and to entertain many discourses with me at severall times. . . ."

Mrs. Sadleir, remembering, perhaps, the happy days when the boy Williams loved and cherished her old father, does not decline to answer his letters, but she is quite unmoved by his long-winded theological arguments, and delivers her opinion of the books which he is impertinent enough to send her, with a frankness worthy of her father:

"SIR,

"I thank God my blessed Parents bred me up in the old and best religion, and it is my glorie that I am a member of the Church of England. . . . When I cast my eye on the frontispiece of your booke and saw it intitled the Bloody Tenant, I durst not adventure to look into it, for fear I should bring into my memory the much blood that has of late bin shed, and which I would faine forget, therefore I do with thanks return it . . . thus entreating you to trouble me no more in this kind, and wishing you a good journey to your charge in New Providence. I rest your friend in the old way,

"A. S."

She is so far civil, though distant, but he returns to his proselytising, and she replies, still with much forbearance:

"MR. WILLUMS,

". . . I have given over reading many bookes, and therefore with thanks have returned yours. Those that I now read besides the Bible, are, first, the late King's Booke, Hooker's Eccles. Polity, Reverend Bishop Andrewes' Sermons with his other divine Meditations, Dr. Jeremy Taylor's works, and Dr. Thos. Jackson upon the Creed: Sum of these my dear Father was a great admirer of, and would often call them the glorious lights of the Church of England, these lights shall be my Guide. I wish they may be yours, for your new lights that are soe much cried up I believe in the Conclusion they will prove but dark lanthorns, therefore I dare not meddle with them. Your frend in the old way.

"ANNE SADLEIR."

But Mr. Williams presently goes too far; he wishes her to read Milton's "Eikonoclastes," and he permits himself to hold language about King Charles and King James which he must have known would be intolerable to the loyal old lady:

> ". . . For the King I knew his person vicious, a swearer from his youth, and an oppressor and persecutor of good men (to say nothing of his own Father's blood and the blood of so many hundred thousand English, Irish, Scotch, French, lately charged upon him). Against his blasphemous Father's cruelties your own deare Father and many precious men shall rise up shortly and cry for vengeance."

This was too much, and Mrs. Sadleir "lets him have it."

She begins her reply by saying she wondered he wrote to her again:

> "As for the foule and false aspersions you have cast upon that King of ever blessed memorie Charles the Marter, I protest I trembled when I read them, and none but a villin such as yourself would have wrot them. Wise Solomon has taught me another lesson, Proverbs 29, verse 21. . . . For Melton's Book that you desire I should read, if I be not mistaken, that is he that has wrot a book of the lawfulness of devorce, and if report says true, he had at that time two or three wives living, this perhaps were good Doctrine in New England, but it is most abominable in Old England . . . for his book that he wrot against the King . . . you should have taken notice of God's judgment upon him, who stroke him with blindness, and as I have heard, he was faine to have the helpe of one Andrew Marvell,[1] or else he could not have finished that most accursed Libell. God has begun his judgment upon him here, his punishment will be hereafter in hell. . . . I have also read Taylor's book of the Liberty of Prophesying, I say it and you would make a good fire. But you have his Divine Institution of the Office Ministeriall, I assure you it is both worth your reading and practice. Bishop Laud's booke against Fisher I have long since read, which, if you have not done, let me tell you that he has largely wounded the Pope, and I believe howsoever he be slighted, he will rise a saint when many seeming ones such as you are will rise devills. . . . I cannot conclude without putting you in minde how deare a Lover and great admirer my Father was of the Liturgie of the Church of England, and would often say no Reformed Church had the like, he was constant to it in his life and at his death. I will walk as directly to heaven as I can, in which place, if you will turn from being a rebell, and fear God, and obey the King, there is hope I may mete you there. Howsoever trouble me no more with your letters, for these are verie troblesome to her that wishes you in the place from whence you came. . . ."

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[1] See *post*, p. 72.

Formidable Mrs. Sadleir! One can but hope that her direct speech made the ears of the sanctimonious Mr. Williams tingle. He did not return to England again. Had he done so, I believe she would have carried out her threat, and with his letters as her evidence, would have shown him the way to Tyburn. Truly a woman of Elizabethan breed. She was wrong about Milton, and we shall all hope that she was mistaken as to his being in hell. But holding the opinions she did, the warmth of her language can be understood.

One more specimen of her power of invective I take from her notebook:

> "1648 . . . was the King murdered. The Scotch, like Judas their elder brother, betrayed and sould there owne anoynted King unto our rebellious Parliament; the Armie takes him from them, they, when he was in the custodie of this most cursed armie, votes [*sic*] that no more addresses be made to him, which was in plaine tearmes to depose him; this armie, the sum of all the off scouring of this nation after an unheard of way, tries him for his life, unjustly condemns and murders him, the most Pious, Religious, wise Prince that ever this Kingdome had . . . with him Glorie is departed from our Israell: oh tell it not in Gath.
>
> "I have read of many men that were monsters in nature, but 2 were beyond them all, Judas that Grand Traytor . . . the other was Herod the Great, who, after he had committed more cruelties than can be reckoned up, at length slew all the innocent babes of two yeares old and under, in hope to have killed his King . . . before his death, he, fearing that no one could mourne for him, shut up all the Nobility in severall places, commanding his sister Salome, [and] as soon as he was dead, to put them to death, that there might be a generall mourning, if not for him, yet for them.
>
> "You see what he was, you may easily tell where he is. It were strainge that these 2 monsters in Nature should mete in one man, with the addition of Nerva, Caligula, and Julian the Apostate. To the sorrow of my heart I write it, mine eyes have seen it—Oliver Cromwell that calls himself the Protector, has, with Judas, betrayed the Lord's Anoynted and put him to death!"
>
> "1658. This year died that arch-traytor and Tyrant Oliver Cromwell, sum say in that greate unheard of winde, and it is worth the noting that his funerall was of St. Clement's Day, on which day all the Brewers kepes holiday. . . ."

* * * * *

Having now learned something of Mrs. Sadleir's character, let us ask about her husband and her home. Her father did his best for Mrs. Anne when he secured Rafe Sadleir for her husband, as regards both wealth and honourable birth. Mr. Rafe Sadleir, son of Sir Thomas, was grandson of a very great man, that Sir Ralfe Sadleir who had been to Henry VIII., Mary, Edward, and Elizabeth, both servant and statesman. Sir Walter Scott edited his State Papers and wrote a Memoir of him. He died in 1587, being reputed the richest Commoner in England, and he had built himself a noble mansion, designed, it is said, by the famous John Thorpe, at Standon in Hertfordshire, which fine property was given him by Henry VIII. The house was, and what is left of it, is still known as "Standon Lordship." Mrs. Anne, then, had the command of great wealth, and a magnificent house to live in.[1] Her husband has been immortalised by Izaac Walton:

> "Tomorrow morning we shall meet a pack of otter-dogs of noble Mr. Sadleir's, upon Amwell Hill, who will be there so early that they intend to prevent the sun rising."

Sir H. Chauncey, writing some thirty years after Mr. Sadleir's death, says he was famous for his noble table, his great hospitality to his neighbours, and his abundant charity to the poor. Also that he prosecuted a neighbour for fishing in his river and won his case.

A keen sportsman, a liberal landlord, he was likely to be a kind husband. But they had no children, and there is a curious statement made in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1782, that though "he lived with his wife in good correspondance

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[1] Having passed into the family of the Lords Aston of Forfar, who were Roman Catholics, and who became comparatively poor under persecution, the fine old house fell upon evil times. On the death of the last Lord Aston, in 1751, it devolved upon his two daughters, who eventually sold it to the Plumers. If Horace Walpole is to be trusted, none of the family had lived at Standon Lordship since 1723, and when he visited it in 1761, it appeared a ruinous old house, and had become partly a farm and partly a Popish seminary. Yet there were pictures and tapestry, especially a picture of Lady Elizabeth, Chief Justice Coke's second wife, in a church, with Sir Edward's coffin, which one would give a good deal to see now. But what was Anne Sadleir, Sir Edward's daughter by his "first and best wife" (to use her own words), doing with a portrait of the second and "bad" wife, I wonder? The greater portion of the house was pulled down by Mr. Plumer-Ward before 1829. It is now the property of the Duke of Wellington. What remained of Standon was burned down in 1927, but the traces of the old foundations show that originally it was a very large house.

59 years in the same house," yet, according to the tradition of the neighbourhood, the marriage had never been consummated.

Mr. Sadleir died in 1660, and though his widow continued to live at Standon until her death, the estates passed to his nephew, Walter, Lord Aston, who sometimes resided there, and lived "in a very grand manner." The Astons were a great family in Staffordshire, and had a noble house of their own—Tixall, near Stafford. The shell of its gatehouse remains to show how splendid a place it has been. Sir Walter Aston, created Lord Aston of Forfar, in the Peerage of Scotland, Ambassador to Spain in King James's time, had married Gertrude, only sister to Mr. Ralfe Sadleir. They had several children, of whom two were correspondents of their Aunt Sadleir. She speaks of the elder son Walter as her adopted son, and he addresses her as "dear Mother"; so there was evidently much love between aunt and nephew. The younger son, Herbert, was too much of a proselytising Catholic, and that displeased his aunt, who, nevertheless, corresponded with him, arguing bravely against his ecclesiastical opinions, and defending the Church of England, which Herbert unkindly declared to be disfigured by "dissenting warts and protesting wenns."

There is one letter, however, in which, anxious to tell his aunt about King Charles II.'s arrival in London, he lets theology alone. From this long epistle may be extracted a part of his description of—

> "The glorious day we have had here whereof no man was a greater spectator than myself, I hope not a truer rejoyceur that Justice and Peace might kiss each other agayne in our Kingdome. I managed my business so dextrously that I saw his Majestie's reception in 3 severall places, at Blacke Heathe, after through Depford, and lastly in the City, all so splendid hearty and magnificent as could possibly be performed. The people were so transported in some townes by the way that beside strewing them with flowers and sweet herbes, they hung out of their windows and on signposts, ribbons, bracelets, rings, silver spoons, and bowed Love-tokens, as willing to sacrifice their private joyes to the publique and universall jubily. His Majestie came in a coach with the 2 Dukes his brothers, Duke of Buckingham and Gen. Monke in the same, till Blacke Heathe when he took horse, His 2 Bros. marching all the way of each side of him, the Generall, bareheaded, before him, the Duke of Buckingham and other nobles after; he went twice round the heathe wher Monke's old troopes of horse and all the Gentlemen of the towne, I might say of the 3 Kingdoms, the considerablest part of them

> at least, were drawne up into troopes . . . on foote and horseback. . . . Upon the heath and att Depford their were a regiment of Virgins all drest in white who strewed the wayes upon the heathe in an excess of joy, and a good old woman not of the meanest, neyther, fell on her knees, and catching the King's foote, bestowed a kiss upon it with 'God bless his Sacred Majestie with the rest of the Royal Ospring.' . . . The Tower and all the ships to Greenwich whither I went by water were adorned and set out with all their trim and galantry imaginable."

He concludes by sending his "kind respects to your so Civill attendants." A good mistress makes good servants, and I am sure the household at Standon were the very pearls and flowers of the domestic kind. To hang out strings of your silver spoons seems a curious mode of indicating joy, and decorating your house.

Walter Aston (born 1609, died 1678) had been a devoted soldier for King Charles I., doing notable service both at Lichfield and Oxford. A letter to Aunt Sadleir, written in 1660, and preserved by her, refers to his relations with King Charles II.:

> "I am heere giving his Majesty account of some busyness his Majesty pleased to employ mee in. Tho' I have not a place of profitt, I shall have those of confidence and trust."

The next, a charmingly kind letter, is dated from Tixall, Aprill 16, but Walter Aston was one of those exasperating people who sometimes omit to put the year as well as the month on their letters. However, this must be 1660. Uncle Sadleir had died on February 12, and his widow had evidently written to her nephew in much grief.

> "Most deare Mother,
>
> "Pray be merry, itt is the best Physick, and I trust in God I shall many and many a time be merry with you at Standon; and if at any time my presence shall be necessary lett me but receave the least notice of itt, and itt shall be obeyed, for I can bee with you in three days. My wife[1] and all myne present desire their duty."

Mr. Sadleir being dead, Lord Aston goes to visit a distant property left him by his uncle.[2]

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[1] Mary, daughter of Richard Weston, first Earl of Portland.

[2] The estate in the West was doubtless the Manors of Henbury, and Stoke Bishop in the parish of Westbury-on-Trim, both near Bristol, which King Edward VI. had conferred upon Sir Rafe Sadleir.

"MOST DEARE MOTHER,

"I am newly returned from the West, where I find a very considerable estate, and had not Prince Rupert burned down the house, I would at least once in two years, have lived some time there. Mr. Welly gave a very noble character of my Uncle and his goodness to his tenants."

These letters are docketed by Mrs. Sadleir, "The letters of my adopted deare son the Lo: Aston."

There remains neither storied urn nor animated bust in Standon Church to perpetuate the name and virtue of Mr. Ralfe Sadleir, unless, as Major Sadleir-Stoney suggests, a slab from which the brasses have been removed be the stone dedicated by Mrs. Anne to the memory of her departed husband. There are magnificent tombs, with effigies, for his father and grandfather and their wives, while for his dear lady there is only a modest tablet, now placed in the Vestry:

"Here lyes y^e bodie of Ann Coke eldest daughter of S^r Edw. Coke Kt. Lord Chief Justice of y^e Common Pleas by his first and best wyfe Bridgett Paston daughter and Heire of John Paston of Norf. Esq. At y^e age of 15 she was married in 1601 to Ralfe Sadleir of Standon in Hartfordshire Esq. She lived his wife 59 years and od months She survived him and HERE lies in an assured hope of a joyfull resurrection.

"For I know that my redeemer liveth," etc.

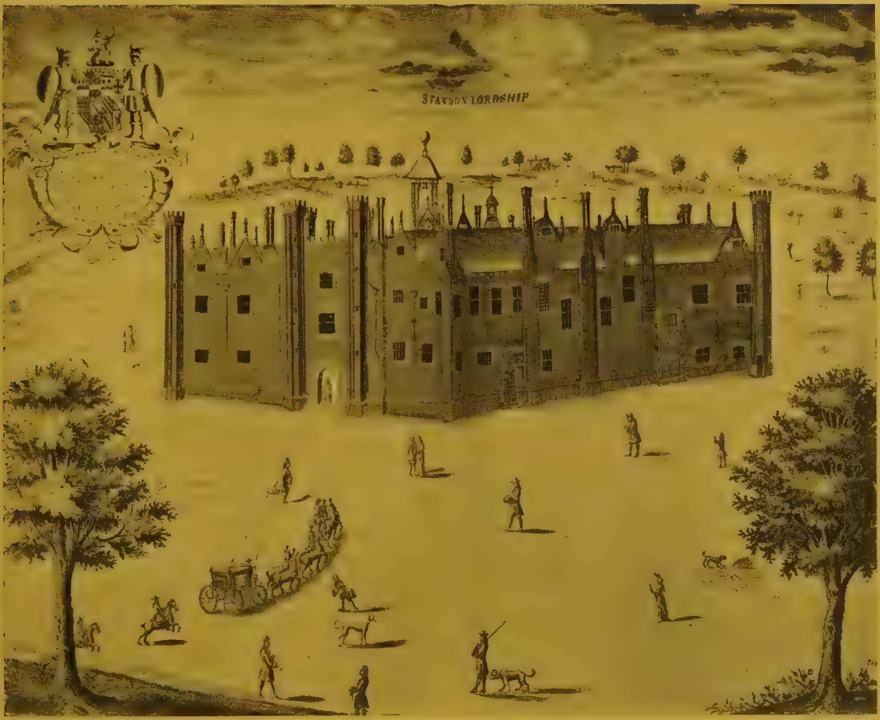
It will be observed that the date of her death is not given. No doubt she prepared the inscription in her lifetime, and left the date to be added, and this was not done. It may be assumed that she died between October 21, 1670, when it is on record that she presented Mr. John Wade as Vicar of Standon, and March 15, 1671, which is the earliest date in the Standon Register of Burials. She was a very old woman, older than she thought. In her volume of notes and religious extracts, under the date 1656, she wrote: "I am this year three score and 8 years old, and will as much as these rebellious times will give leave, give myself to cherefulness, bycause I draw nere to my eternal happiness."

But as she was born in March, 1584, she was then seventy-two, and she must have been eighty-six when at last the trumpets sounded for her and she passed through the Golden Gate to receive the reward of her piety and charity. Her last letter to be preserved was that in which she testified to the care she had, and the trouble she would take, for a relation.

It was that in which she begged the Master of Trinity to grant a scholarship to her cousin Stubbe.

Let us take leave of the good old Lady by writing out the "Prayer for this Family" which she used every day. Surely it is of her own composition.

> "O God, my God, as Thou hast in mercie hitherto, in the same mercie still be with me, and as Thou hast begun, for Jesus Christ my Saviour's sake, still, oh still hould Thy holy hand over this house and famylie, and, since it hath pleased Thee to make me a mistris over sume of them, I humbly beseech Thee so to assist me with Thy holy spirit, that the short time I have to live here, I may soe direct them, and they with the rest of this famylie, may soe serve Thee both now and hereafter, that when the great day of account comes, wee may appear before Thee with joy, and not with sorrow, and that for Jesus Christ His sake. Amen."



STANDON LORDSHIP.

From Sir R. Chauncey's "History of Hertfordshire" (1700).

THORNTON COLLEGE GATEHOUSE, FROM THE INTERIOR.
From a photograph by Colonel Fr. Meynell.

THORNTON COLLEGE, ENTRANCE AND GATEHOUSE.

CHAPTER IX

BRIDGET COKE, MRS. SKYNNER

(Younger daughter of Sir Edward Coke and Bridget Paston; born at Osterley, Middlesex, December, 1596; married (1) William Berney, (2) William Skynner; died 1653.)

ANNE COKE was a great girl, almost a grown-up young lady according to the views taken of young-ladyhood in the sixteenth century, when Baby Bridget came, in 1596, to enliven that Christmas feast at Osterley which has been already described—to enliven it, yes, for the so recent death of the Cokes' old friend and Anne's godmother, Lady Gresham, of Osterley, may well have saddened the holiday.

After their mother's death, surely Sister Anne played the part of mother to the little one, and brought her up in the fear of God. Thomas Fuller may be believed when he added to his mention of Bridget Coke, " she was a very religious Gentlewoman." Her father married her to an honourable young gentleman of the best Norfolk blood—William, eldest son of Sir Thomas Berney, of Rudham, and Julian, daughter of the Chief Justice's friend and colleague on the Bench, Sir Thomas Gawdie. But this union came to a speedy end. Mr. Berney died untimely, and in 1613, when Bridget was still only seventeen, she was married again, from her sister's house of Standon, to another William. He was the eldest son of Sir Vincent Skynner, a gentleman of Lincolnshire, whose forbears owned property at Waynfleet, in that county, and were merchants at Lincoln. Wood says that Mr. Skynner was a merchant of London. If this be true, he lived a long way from his business, for he took his bride to live at Thornton College, in the northeast corner of Lincolnshire, a property which his father had bought in 1602.

Thornton College had been a priory of Augustinian or Black Canons of great extent and magnificence. It was founded in 1121, and became a mitred abbey in 1517.

But into its fuller history I cannot enter, nor do I know how much of it remained in good condition when William and

Bridget went to live there. The ruins of Thornton are very grand; the entrance and the splendid gatehouse still show how noble must have been the great pile of buildings of which they once formed but a small part; and the fragments of the church are of exquisite architecture. From the upper windows of the gatehouse the broad River Humber is well seen, a few miles distant. The College was sold by the last of the Skynners to Sir Richard Sutton. It now belongs to Lord Yarborough.

To this once princely and still dignified place, young Mr. William Skynner brought his bride from Standon, and here she bore him six children, four daughters and two sons, before, in 1626, she lost him. It was then a case of Shakespeare's

> "Widowed wombs after their lord's decease,"

for there came a posthumous son, to whom his mother gave the fine old name of Syriack, a son of whom there is a good deal to be said, yet of whom we should like to know more.

Mrs. Skynner honoured her husband with a handsome tomb in Thornton Curtis Church. She thought him so handsome and so good that in the Latin inscription she dwells on the "Curiosa symmetria" of his body, and the "Sacra Virtus" which was its inhabitant, and compares him both to Apollo and to Jupiter.

Syriack Skynner was baptised at Barrow-on-Humber, November, 1627. As his name is spelt "Syriack," both on his father's monument and in the register of his birth, his mother must have countenanced that spelling, and I shall adhere to it.

Now it is through this Syriack that a remarkable distinction came to the Coke family.

Syriack became the pupil, and remained the lifelong friend, of the illustrious poet Milton, who immortalised him in two of his magnificent sonnets. The first of these was addressed to him in his student days. It proposes a relaxation of study and a cheerful interval for recreation, and uses grave poetical language to justify the holiday. Mr. Birrell[1] rather flippantly speaks of Syriack being "urged by Milton to enjoy himself whilst the mood was on him." But that is Mr.

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[1] "Life of Andrew Marvell," by A. Birrell.

Birrell's little way. Here is the sonnet, with its fine allusion to the Chief Justice's fame, and its eloquent justification of mirth not carried to excess:

> "Syriack, whose Grandsire, on the royal bench
> Of British Themis, with no mean applause,
> Pronounced, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
> Which others at their bar so often wrench:
>
> "To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
> In mirth, that after no repenting draws;
> Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
> And what the Swede intend, and what the French.
>
> "To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
> Toward solid good what leads the nearest way;
> For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,
>
> "And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
> That with superfluous burden loads the day,
> And when God send a cheerful hour, refrains."

What led Mrs. Skynner to entrust her little Syriack's education to Milton? One would like to solve the problem why the widow should have yielded up her Benjamin, and sent him from that remote corner of Lincolnshire, to live in London as the pupil of a man whose fame was yet to come. Probably there is some natural and prosaic explanation of her sacrifice. Perhaps there was some respectable Skynner relation established in London, known to, and appreciative of Milton, and it was deemed prudent to send up a clever, promising boy from the bucolic solitudes of Thornton, to gain what advantage he might from the intellectual society of London. In Lincolnshire, very likely, the conversation was of "runts."

It may be that Mrs. Skynner's elder boys had come under some bad influences at home, which she wished the youngest to escape. Of William, her second son, Mrs. Skynner says in her Will, "he was and is undutifull to mee his mother." If the child be father of the man, William was badly brought up. Perhaps Mrs. Skynner thought she would do better for Syriack, and she seems to have had reason to trust him more than his brother, for, although the youngest, she made him her executor.

But an attractive theory of the introduction of Syriack to Milton—unsupported, I admit, by any evidence—is that it was through a common friend who was afterwards to win imperishable renown as a poet: none other than Andrew Marvell, the scholar-poet of gardens, and that Horatian Ode upon Cromwell which contains the verses about King Charles which everybody knows:

" He nothing common did, or mean,
Upon that memorable scene,
But with his keener eye
The axe's edge did try;

" Nor call'd the Gods with vulgar spite,
To vindicate his helpless right;
But bow'd his comely head
Down, as upon a bed."

The date is not known at which Milton and Marvell first made acquaintance with each other, an acquaintance which was to result in Marvell's becoming Milton's assistant as Secretary to the Council. From a letter which Milton wrote to Bradshaw, 1653, suggesting " Mr. Marvile " for the appointment—" a man whom both by report, and the converse I have had with him [is] of singular desert for the State to make use of "—it might seem that their acquaintance was but recent.

But two years before the date of this letter, we know that Mrs. Sadleir had heard a report that Milton " was faine to have the help of one Andrew Marvell," so that Milton's acquaintance with Marvell may have been of longer standing than the expression in the letter seems to imply.

It is not impossible that they may have met through friends at Cambridge. Mr. Birrell thinks that they must have had common friends there, and it may be that Andrew Marvell, greatly impressed by what he knew of Milton, had warmly recommended him to Mrs. Skynner as the very man to educate her son.

For that the families of Skynner and Marvell were well known to each other, it seems impossible to doubt. There has always been a tradition, indeed, that Mrs. Skynner was young Andrew's patroness, providing him with the funds necessary for his career at Cambridge, and afterwards for his travels on the Continent. Again there is no evidence of the truth of this legend, but it may be true; the Cokes were ever a generous, kind-hearted race, and Bridget Skynner's compassion must have been keenly aroused by a distressing tragedy, which happened close to her home, in which young Marvell lost his father by drowning.

The accounts given of the accident are varying and confused. Mr. H. N. Margoliouth has summarised them in a paper which he contributed to the *Modern Language Review* (Cambridge University Press), vol. xvii., p. 357.

Thomas Fuller's account (1662) is the earliest and best known, and Fuller, being acquainted with the family of Berkeley, as Rector of their church at Cranford, Middlesex, ought to have known something about the Cokes, the Chief Justice's eldest surviving son Robert having married Theophila Berkeley, and his grandson Edward, a daughter of George, Lord Berkeley. Fuller's story is that old Mr. Marvell was crossing the Humber "with Madam Skinner, daughter of Sir Edward Coke." They were drowned, and none of the bodies ever recovered, "though earnestly sought for on distant shores." But Fuller was wrong about the drowned lady, for the date of the tragedy is given as 1641, and Mrs. Skynner lived till 1653.

Then there is an account, copied by Gent (1735), given by Abraham de la Pryme in a manuscript History of Hull; and the "Biographica Britannia," vol. v. (1760), has another "as transmitted from persons intimate with both families concerned in the sad catastrophe, and now first given to the public as a curious truth." Curious it certainly is, and from it we learn that the Reverend Mr. Marvell, "Town Preacher" of Hull, and "Master of God's House" (an almshouse known as the Charterhouse), was a man of great reputation on the banks of Humber. He was intimate with a lady who lived on the southern side of the river with an only daughter. This daughter went to Hull, to be godmother to a child of Mr. Marvell's. When it was time for her to return, he would go with her. Gent adds to the party "a beautiful young couple who were going to be married." The boat capsized near the village of Barrow, and all in it were drowned, Mr. Marvell's last words, which must have been heard by some standing on the bank, being, "Ho! for Heaven," instead of the usual cry of "Ho! for Barrow." The mother of the young lady, who could see the river from her garden, received a supernatural message about her daughter's fate which must be described in the language of its first narrator:

> "The Lady seated herself in an arbour in her Garden, and while, with no small anxiety, she beheld the tempestuous state of the river, she saw, (or thought she saw) a most lovely boy, with flaxen curls, come into the Garden, who, making directly up to her, said, 'Madam, Your Daughter is safe now.' The lady, greatly surprized said, 'My pretty dear, how didst thou know anything of my daughter, or that she was in danger?' Then, bidding him stay there, she arose and went into the house to look for a pretty piece of new money, to reward him. But on returning, the child was gone, and on examining her family about him, she found nobody but herself had seen him. . . . This gave her some suspicion of her misfortune, which was after confirmed."

She then sent for young Andrew Marvell, charged herself with his education, and left him her fortune.

That is the gist of the story as given by the "Biographica Britannia."

How are these accounts to be reconciled and explained?

Mr. Birrell says there has always been a persistent tradition in Hull that Mrs. Skynner was Andrew Marvell's patroness, but there is no evidence to prove it. It is certain, however, that she was not, as Fuller thought, the lady who was drowned, and even if she was the lady who saw the pretty phantom in her garden, the "persons intimate with both families" were wrong about her leaving her fortune to Andrew Marvell, for his name is not mentioned in Mrs. Skynner's Will. Again, if she "charged herself with Andrew's education," she had begun to do so three years before the tragedy, for Andrew went to Cambridge in 1638.

Still, it seems unlikely that Fuller would have brought the name of Skynner into his version of the tragedy, unless some member of that family had had something to do with it. It has been suggested that as it was not Mrs. Skynner who was drowned with old Mr. Marvell, it may have been her daughter Bridget. Both ladies bore the same Christian name. Fuller may have heard that "Bridget Skynner" was drowned, and have concluded, without verifying his reference, that the victim was the mother, not the daughter.

It is certain that a Bridget Skynner was buried at the Church of Barrow-on-Humber, on July 27, 1643, and so recorded in the Parish Register. It may be fairly assumed that she was Mrs. Skynner's daughter Bridget. But the register says nothing as to the manner of her death.

The late Lord Liverpool, who descended from Mrs. Skynner's youngest daughter Theophila Cornewall, was much interested in his family pedigrees, and made considerable research into the history of the Skynners. He informed Canon Foster, Secretary of the Lincoln Record Society (to whose kindness and knowledge I am greatly indebted), that Bridget Skynner, daughter of the Mrs. Skynner who was born Bridget Coke, was drowned when crossing the Humber. On what authority Lord Liverpool made this statement, Canon Foster does not know, but thinks it was taken from some family letters. The present Lord Liverpool allowed Canon Foster to inspect his father's notebooks, but nothing about the tragedy was found in them.

If the lady drowned together with Andrew Marvell's father was, in truth, Bridget Skynner the younger, the statement that none of the victims of the tragedy was ever found, " though earnestly sought for on distant shores," is inaccurate. But it seems difficult to believe that if the Bridget Skynner, buried at Barrow in 1643, had been drowned, under circumstances so notorious, two years previously, the register should be silent about the manner of her death, or the recovery of her body. However, until more certain information be found, we may believe, if we like, that the lady drowned with Mr. Marvell was Mrs. Skynner's daughter Bridget, and that her body was recovered two years later.

The Skynners seem to have used the churches of Thornton Curtis, Goxhill, and Barrow-on-Humber, indifferently, for their christenings and funerals. At that time registers were not kept with scrupulous care. Some day, perhaps, an account of the death of old Mr. Marvell and his companions, which can be relied on as accurate, may come to light. In the meantime we have no proof that Chief Justice Coke's daughter Bridget was the patroness of Andrew Marvell; only tradition. But it is a legend which one would like to believe. That her son Syriack and Andrew Marvell were acquainted in later days, at any rate, there is ample evidence. Mrs. Sadleir's allusion to the rumour that wicked Milton " was fain to have the help of one Andrew Marvell " might seem strange, possibly disingenuous, if the said

Andrew had indeed been educated by her sister Skynner. But on the other hand, it may be that it was through her sister that the knowledge of Milton and Marvell's connection came to her. When Mrs. Skynner sent Syriack to Milton, she could not have anticipated that the tutor would one day develop such advanced views as those held by the author of "Eikonoclastes," the book which so horrified Mrs. Sadleir. She may have been in complete agreement with her sister's doctrines about Church and King, and have cut her former friend out of her Will in consequence of his becoming so perverted a wretch as to help Milton in his "accursed" book on the "Lawfulness of Divorce."

That Mrs. Sadleir corresponded with Mrs. Skynner is certain, for in 1652 Dr. Ferne sent complimentary messages to "your good sister, Mrs. Skynner."

Mrs. Skynner's youngest daughter, Theophila, who married Captain Humphrey Cornewall, of Berrington, Hereford, must not be forgotten. For Mr. Margoliouth hazards the attractive suggestion that Andrew Marvell's lovely poem on "The Picture of Little T. C. in a Prospect of Flowers" may have been a tribute to her daughter. Two of her children were given their mother's name of Theophila; her first daughter was so christened, but it died when only two days old in 1643. Next year another was born, and given the same name. It has never been certainly ascertained who Marvell's "Little T. C." was. But Mr. Margoliouth's conjecture that she was little Theophila Cornewall is very happy, and he justly quotes the concluding stanza of the poem, to which the premature death of the first baby Theophila undoubtedly gives point. Here it is:

"But oh, young Beauty of the woods,
Whom Nature courts with fruits and flowers,
Gather the flowers, but spare the buds;
Lest Flora, angry at thy crime
To kill her infants in their prime,
Should quickly make the' example yours;
And 'ere we see—
Nip in the blossom all our hopes and thee."

Syriack was living in 1657 in the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and he was buried there, August 8, 1700. I do not know the name of his wife, but he left an only daughter, Annabella, to whom administration of his effects was granted. As befitted a pupil of Milton, he had frequented the society of clever people, and was known to his cousin Roger Coke, to Harrington, and to Aubrey.

I wish we knew certainly about the traditional connection of Mrs. Skynner with Andrew Marvell. But we know enough to link the name of Bridget Coke, the Osterley baby, first married to Berney, and then to Skynner, with two great poets, and that connection adds lustre indeed to the name of Coke.

Syriack Skynner continued his friendship with Milton for many years. It must be hoped that he showed his mother the earlier sonnet, and that she was proud of her son having earned the affection and respect of his master.

But she was dead when Milton sent him the second of the two poems, for its date is probably about 1655, after Milton had become totally blind.

" Cyriack, this three years day, these eyes, though clear
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light, their seeming have forgot:
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear

" Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or men or women. Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate one jot
Of heart or hope : but still bear up and steer

" Right onward; what supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, Friend, to have lost them over plied
In Liberty's defence, my noble task,

" Of which all Europe rings from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask
Content, though blind, had I no better guide."

That Milton should have addressed some of his noblest lines of poetry to a son of the Cokes, is indeed a bright passage in their history.

CHAPTER X

THE SONS OF SIR EDWARD COKE—A SPENDTHRIFT FAMILY

SIR EDWARD believed that all who "excelled in the knowledge of the Laws, sucked from the breasts of that divine knowledge, honesty, gravity and integrity, and by the goodness of God hath obtained a greater blessing and ornament than any other profession to their family and posterity." He says: "I never saw a man of loose and lawless life attain to any sound knowledge of the said laws: and on the other side, I never saw any man of excellent judgment in the laws, but was withal (being taught by such a master) honest, faithful and virtuous—wherefore a great lawyer never dies improlis aut intestatus, and his posterity continue to flourish to distant generations" (Preface to Second Report).

But though he brought up his sons to the Law, it seems that they sucked that goddess' breasts to little purpose, for in their earlier years, at any rate, they gave their father a great deal of trouble. Though he did not die "improlis" or "intestatus" (*pace* his biographers), his intention of "founding a family" came very near to shipwreck more than once.

He calls himself in one place "an affectionate, loving and provident father." Perhaps he was too indulgent and "spoiled" them, but this does not seem likely; perhaps he was too busy with cares of state, his profession, and his later domestic broils, to give them adequate attention; or can it be that they were born under an unlucky moon, or under the patronage of some uninfluential saint? Their father generally noted the position of the moon, or the saint's day, in his private register of his children's births, thus:

> "Edward, Nov. 27, 1583, luna in libra:
> John, Moon in Scorpion:
> Henry, moon in Aries, S. Rufinus."

The more probable reason for their early foolishness is that they had no mother to love and guide them when they were boys and young men.

The death, in the bloom of youth, of Edward, his eldest son and heir, must have been a heavy blow. Born in 1583, at Huntingfield, Edward was brought up by the Rev. Robert Gold, parson of Bramfield and Thorington. Mrs. Bedingfield left Mr. Gold £10 for the "great pains and diligent care he had with her grandson." He was a Commoner at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1596, and proceeded B.A. from St. Catharine's in 1600-01, and was admitted at the Inner Temple, November, 1599. He died before 1606, for in that year his brother Robert is spoken of as the heir to Sir Edward. In the Chief Justice's old age, two other sons died, Arthur and Clement, both in 1629. Before entering on such brief records of Edward Coke's sons as have survived, it will be well to state at once the nature of the trouble they brought upon their father. They were spendthrifts. He had toiled and made money; they did their best, it seems, to dissipate it. This we learn first of all from the report of a case for Counsel, which was debated after Sir Edward's death, concerning portions for his grandchildren:

> "In August, 1626, Sir Edward Coke, then having no money or very little by him, by deed . . . reciting that as no provision had been made for the younger sons or daughters of his sons, for whom he had intended to make provision, if the exorbitant debts of his sons had not been, and yet, out of his natural affection, and not meaning to leave all these poore Infants without all manner of provision, he directed that the Exors. should raise money out of the lands for them. Afterwards Sir Edward Coke, having raised a great sum of money, died without any further declaration. The Question is: Shall the grandchildren have the money indicated in the declaration as also the money raised out of the lands since the declaration was made?"

Sons Robert and Henry agreed with the Executors that the kind old grandfather's wishes for the "poore Infants" should be carried into effect as regards some of them, at any rate, and the Executors "intended to divide the sum of £5,000 among son John's children, had John, like his brother, shown himself reasonable; and unless he signs himself comformable by June 20th, the Executors will not give his children the £5,000." Dated March 8, 1636. It is satisfactory to know that John humbled himself, and his children got their £5,000.

There is at Holkham an old copy of Sir Edward's "Precepts for the use of my children and their Posteritye." No. 16 of these counsels is this: "Keep yourself within your circle and out of debt, for old Divines said that Debt went before deadly sin." He might have preached this good doctrine to the wind, as far as his sons were concerned.

As to these "exorbitant debts," Le Neve ("Norfolk Collections," vol. iii., p. 57) has some information which he derived from a letter written by George Berkeley[1] (nephew to Sir Robert Coke's wife). The letter is not addressed, but was perhaps written to Henry Coke.

Payments by my Lord for his Sonnes Debts

	£	s.	d.
For Sir Robert upon the first great list ...	21,955	0	0
For him more, upon a second warrant ...	6,020	4	8
	27,975	4	8
For Mr. John Coke	500	0	0
For Mr. Arthur Coke, since his death ...	1,372	13	2
For Mr. Clement Coke, since his death ...	1,656	15	2
More for Mr. Clement Coke, in his lifetime	500	0	0
	32,004	13	0

When it is considered that Sir Edward had dowered each of these sons with a good estate, and that three of them had married wealthy heiresses, these debts seem inexcusable, especially in the case of Sir Robert. We are not told that his wife had money, but they had no children. Henry is the only son, it seems, who had a clear character in the article of debts.

In 1612, Sir Edward made his Will, giving all his real and personal estate, "chattells," etc. (except such as were settled on his second wife), to certain trustees, for the use of his eldest son Robert and his heirs, and so on in tail male. There is a curious archaic mode of procedure mentioned in this document. After reciting the provisions of the trust, the deed goes on: "Provided always that if the said Sir Edw. Coke . . . shall at any time hereafter deliver or tender one Ringe of Golde, of the value of Three Shillings or above to the said Sir Henry Gawdie, Edmund Paston, etc. or to any other person to the use of them, in the presence of two or more witnesses, that then this present Graunt . . . shall be utterly voide and of none effect."

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[1] Younger, but only surviving son of George, Baron of Berkeley, Mowbray, Segrave and Bruce, and Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Michael Stanhope, of Sudbourne, Suffolk. Created Earl of Berkeley by Charles II.

We may remember the significant use of a ring to be sent, in the case of Queen Elizabeth and Lord Essex.

Roger Coke, grandson of the Chief Justice, published a statement, many years afterwards, that this important Will was among some papers which were seized by order of the Privy Council, when Sir Edward Coke lay dying, and that it was never restored, nor seen again, "to the great prejudice of his family." This statement has been accepted and copied by several writers. But the Will was certainly administered by the executors, of that there is no doubt. Roger must have meant the codicil which was to provide for the grandchildren. He did not know that his grandfather "died without further declaration"—*i.e.,* never executed the codicil in favour of the "poore infants" (of whom he was one), but merely indicated his wishes to his confidential secretary, Mr. John Pepys. This Mr. Pepys, addressed in a letter by Sir Edward as "So good and understanding a servant" (see p. 91), was more than a mere trusted servant. A lawyer, he was related, through the Mansers of North Creake, to the Holkham heiress, Meriel Wheatley, wife to Sir Edward's son John; one of his brothers, Knyvett Pepys, was born at Godwick, and another, Fermor, established himself at Mileham. He was fourth cousin, once removed, to Samuel Pepys, the diarist (see p. 114).

CHAPTER XI

SIR ROBERT COKE AND HIS WIFE

(Eldest surviving son of Edward Coke and Bridget Paston: born at Huntingfield, September 27, 1587; created a Knight, 1607; married, August 12, 1613, at Berkeley Church, Gloucestershire, to Theophila, only daughter of Sir Thomas Berkeley, and granddaughter of Henry, Lord Berkeley, and sister of George, Lord Berkeley; died July 19, 1653, at The Durdance, near Epsom, and buried in Epsom Church.)

SIR ROBERT COKE describes himself in 1635 as "of Huntingfield." His father, perhaps, had allowed him the use of that stately place during his lifetime, and, in spite of his ill-behaviour in the contraction of such huge debts, it was certainly settled on him after the death of his elder brother Edward. In later life, he lived at a house of his own, The Durdance, near Epsom, which was a Berkeley property and came to him through his wife.

The Chief Justice in his lifetime provided an estate for each of his younger sons, and the remainder of his possessions (except Stoke, and certain other lands which formed the portion of his daughter Frances—offspring of his second marriage) were strictly entailed on his heir-male. So anxious was he that his possessions should descend in the right course, that he went so far as to indicate the eldest daughter of his third son Arthur as the heiress in case of the complete failure of heirs-male. Sir Robert, then, on the death of Edward, the eldest son, was heir to the chief inheritance, and it remained in his possession till his death in 1653, when it went to his next brother, John of Holkham. The manors and lands in Norfolk and Suffolk bought by the Chief Justice were valued at £2,788 a year,[1] to say nothing of the property in other counties.

The chief facts known about Sir Robert, other than his habit of contracting debts, and his subsequent reformation, are that he married a wife who is described as being exceptionally charming and gifted—Theophila, daughter of Sir Thomas Berkeley; that he collected a library of books, which he left to his wife's nephew, who gave them to Sion College; that he had no children who lived more than a few hours; and that he took the King's side in the Civil War, and was imprisoned in the Tower, his estate being sequestrated. Fate was especially cruel to him, for his delightful wife died while he was still a prisoner. Several sources of information remain as to his imprisonment. In a note by the executors of Sir Edward Coke's Will we read:

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[1] In after years the large estates given to John, Henry, and Clement Coke were added to the "Grand Estate" of the family, as well as the properties which their wives brought with them.

> "Theophila, wife of Sir Robert Coke, wished to buy an estate from her brother, Lord Berkeley, for her nephew, George Berkeley, with money left for him in her hands, by her mother, Elizabeth, Lady Berkeley. This was £5,200; the price of the estate was £8,700 and Sir Robert raised the money wanted. He is now in the Tower, and his estates sequestrated by order of the House of Commons, (to which he humbly submits) but there is no cause expressed in that order, and not being guilty of any of the offences aforesaid he for a long time hath been and still is a humble petitioner to that house either to take off the sequestration, or to express the cause, he to be heard upon it, which hitherto he hath not been. By the order Sir Robert is to have a competancy allowed for his maintenance, and the remainder of the profits of the sequestration to be employed in the buying of armes, and defraying charges of Fortification within the Earl of Manchester's association, and the Lords and Commons had seized[1] Bosham as part of Sir Robert's estate."

At Trinity College, Cambridge, there is a letter written by Sir Robert to his sister, Anne Sadleir, after his release from the Tower:

> "Deare Sister,
>
> "I fear you are angry with me because you have not written to me, the reason I did not write was the expectation of my sequestration being taken off, but, Deare Sister, you know that great things move slowly; my comfort is (and soe my conscience is quiet) that they have nothing against me; soe sayth my cosen Corbet, that my case is not to be parraled [*sic*] in England; you may be assured that I will not let slip any lawful meanes; my brother John hath laboured what he can, as he sends me word, but he cannot as yet do any good, I had not writ you word how God hath blessed my Nephew Edward[2] with a son, and

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[1] Bosham, Sussex, is still the property of the Earl of Berkeley.

[2] Edward, eldest son of John Coke (the elder) of Holkham. Born 1613; died 1655. Married Elizabeth, daughter of George, Lord Berkeley. Left no surviving issue.

is to be christened on Thursday next—God grant that as hee grows in years he may in Grace.

"God send us peace, for we are like to see miserable times, if the Scots and Parliament doe not agree . . . thank God I never had my health better.

"Yr faithful brother,
"Robert Coke.

"*November*, 1646."

And in Mrs. Sadleir's manuscript notebook, also at Trinity, there is this note of the year 1653:

> "This year died my dear brother Sir Robert Coke, who in these rebellious times had his share in sufferings for his loyalty to the King, having his estate sequestered for many years, and himself a prisoner in the Tower, and on my knowledge sometimes had not wherewith to bie himself bread, which he bore with soe much patience . . . when his Egyptian taskmasters granted him liberty he retired to his house in Surrie where he spent his time in doing good to all, but more particularly to the King's partie, silenced ministers, poore prisoners, and binding out of poore children . . . with him glorie departed from our poore familie."

Roger Coke, Sir Robert's nephew, tells a story of General Monk, who, defeated by Fairfax, was sent to the Tower, "where he continued four years in great Poverty and Want, but was relieved by a near kinsman of mine, Sir R. C., then a prisoner in the Tower with him." When Monk came out he "changed sides, but did not his good nature to Sir Robert Coke, for at the first opportunity, he took a journey into the country to visit him, and to thank him for his Favoure while they were Prisoners." As a matter of fact, Monk was committed to the Tower July 8, 1644, and was released September, 1646, so his term of imprisonment was two years, and not four. Sir Robert had been released before the latter date, but he was certainly in the Tower more than a year before Monk's committal, for he was there when his wife died in the spring of 1643. This we learn from a "Pastoral Elegy on the death of the noble, learned and most religious lady, Lady Theophila Coke, who died the beginning of this Spring, 1643," the manuscript of which curious piece is still at Holkham.

The author has signed his name to the preface: "Edvardus Salmon, scripsit, May 2, 1643"; and the learned Dr. Samuel Parr's well-known hand has written underneath: "Mr. Salmon appears to have been college Lecturer for Verses etc. that year." The poet begins thus in prose:

"Hints for Verse upon the Death of the most accomplished Lady Theophila Coke, only sister to Lord George Berkeley, one of the ancientest extracts of Nobility in these Kingdoms: Her Father son and heir of the old Lord Berkeley of Berkeley in Gloucestershire, her Mother, the immediate heire-general of Queen Elizabeth: her ancestor having married the sister of Q. Ann of Bulloigne: her Vertue so inexpressible that poetry cannot flatter her: while as Wife, as the Lady of a Family or otherwise (only not fruitful) every way Heroine: so admired by all those knowing her, that she was deservedly called the Lady *καθ' ἐξοχὴν*. Skilled in no lesse than foure Tongues, besides her Mother, French, Italian, Latin, Greek, and yet which is most admirable, known by none, but by those who desired to be instructed from her. . . . There was One, her Goodness, instead of Rewarding, slighted him, for being so bold in an Epistle dedicatory to compare her to the Blessed Virgin. Think what you can of Woman, under that pitch, and you do but reach her. She was the sole Comforter of Sir Robert Coke, her husband, now a loyal prisoner in the Tower. She died of the small-pox at the age of forty-five, being as sweet a Lady as e'er the sunbeams saluted. She miscarried of two children, the one a male, the other a female, Nature perhaps being unwilling to communicate such goodness as might have been derived from her, lest thereby she might have spent her stock, and become a bankrupt to future ages. . . . She was born on St. Lucy's Day, the shortest of the year, educated and brought up with the Queen of Bohemia.[1] She delighted in Gardens and was rarely Judicious in Architecture, in which, if she had come sooner to affluence in estate, she had bestowed more; She built and adorned the neatest chapel e're I saw in a private family."

Mr. Salmon's Muse does not add lustre to the Coke family, as do Ben Jonson's and Milton's. From his two Elegies and an Epitaph shall be quoted but two passages; the first because it is so typical of the feeling for noble ancestry common among the Cavaliers, the second because it refers to Sir Robert.

"Some glory in their ancestors, thy Grace
Did add Nobility to Berkley's race,
Thy Virtue struggled to outshine thy Birth,
Ordained by Heaven to cheare the drooping Earthe."

One might suspect Mr. Salmon of being author of an epitaph in Ewelme Church on a lady (Dorothy Countess of Berkshire, daughter to Earl Rivers):

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[1] Elizabeth (1596-1662), eldest daughter of James I. and Anne of Denmark; married, 1612, the Elector Palatine, Frederick V., afterwards King of Bohemia. She was brought up by Lord and Lady Harington at Combe Abbey.

"Whose Beauty equalled, whose Virtue excelled
The Greatness of her Birth and Quality";

as also the Latin description on Lady Theophila's tomb in Epsom Church. Cambridge[1] was no doubt a "nest of singing birds" at this time, but our "College Lecturer in Verses" was scarcely among its nightingales, however much we may admire the generosity of his sentiments:

"Sweet Lady, are you gone? Then who must dry
The tears that hang on your poor Prisoner's eye?
Yet do not grieve, Good Knight, perhaps she went
To move your cause in Heaven's just Parliament."

Unlike too many of the family manuscripts, this little unbound quarto has been carefully preserved, and there is a transcript of the "Hints for Verses," though not of the verses themselves, at the Bodleian (Eng. Misc., E. 13). Before Dr. Parr's all-searching eye lighted upon it, a gentleman had seen it who added a "Sonnet to the Memory of Lady Coke." He signs himself, "Carolus Emily, Trin. Coll. Cantab. Alumn. 1757."

Mr. Emily ignorantly supposes that the Robert Cokes had lived at Holkham, for after enquiring whether Lady Theophila's shade roves in heaven, he asks:

"Or haunts 't, a Naiad trim or Dryad green,
Thy much-loved Holkham, still with wondering eyes
Beholding mid' the varigated scene
The Beauteous Pile in Nice proportion rise?"

It may be questioned whether Theophila ever saw her brother-in-law John Coke's old house and estate at Holkham. If she did, her ghost could hardly have recognised the place in 1757.

Sir Robert Coke survived his wife ten years, dying July, 1653. His man of business, one Edward Wenyeve, writes to John Coke from London on July 10:

"SIR,

According to the will of Sir Robert Coke, I have bought blacks for yourself and your two men, they ly ready for you at Mr. William Driver's the Draper, at the Golden Fleece in Paul's Church yard. I gave order that Mr. Berry, your servant, should take notice thereof and convey them to you."

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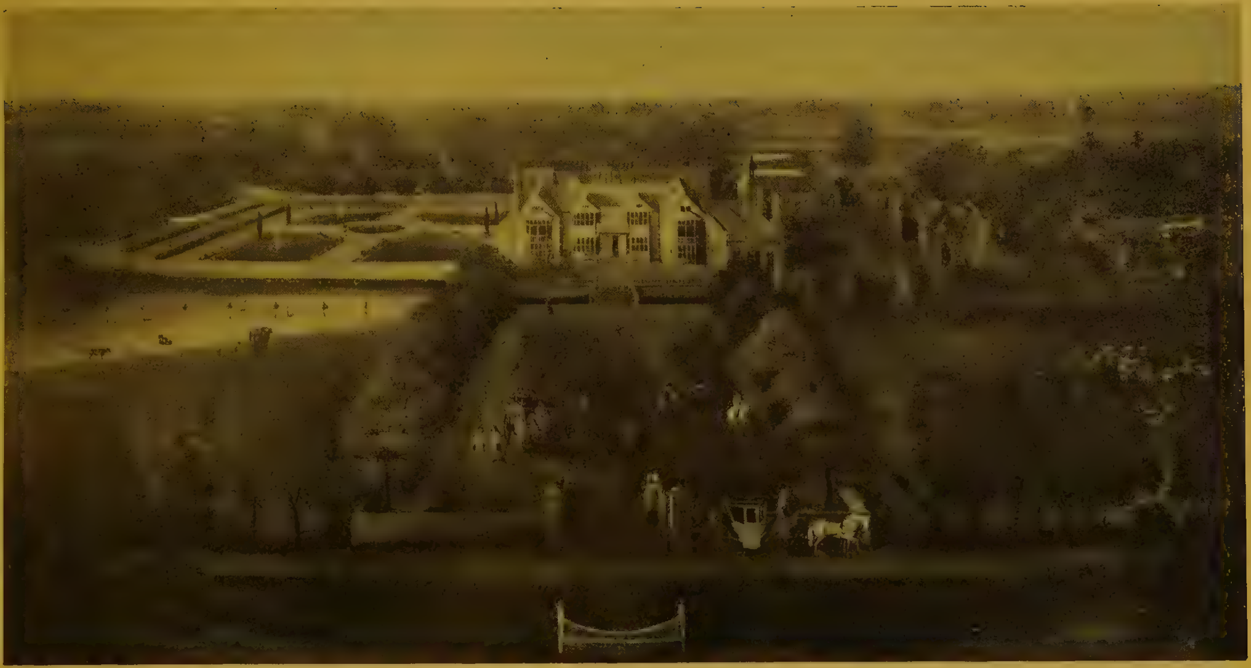
[1] Mr. Salmon not being mentioned by à Wood, I conclude he adorned the sister University.

THEOPHILA BERKELEY (1598-1643), WIFE OF SIR ROBERT COKE.

From a portrait at Holkham.



THE DURDANS.

From a painting by Knyff (1671) at Berkeley Castle. By permission of the Earl of Berkeley.

In Tanner's Bodleian MS. 230, there is a note about Huntingfield which says: "Sir Robert Coke was sheriff, 1652. He died in his Sheriffwyke, his estate thought worth £4000 per an., the most of which he left to his brother John, having no issue of his own." Tanner was right about the succession to the landed estate, for by his Will, dated September 7, 1632, Sir Robert left all his copyhold land in England to his brother John Coke. He was buried by the side of his wife in Epsom Church, where Nephew George Berkeley placed a handsome stone tomb and a very laudatory inscription.

A man is not on oath in a lapidary inscription, as Dr. Johnson reminds us, but Lord Berkeley's eulogies of his uncle and aunt were probably sincere enough and well deserved. We have seen how highly admirable Mrs. Sadleir valued her brother; and of his wife Theophila she wrote:

> "For her perfect bewtie and vertue she was justly styled the glorie of her sex, soe much pietie, simplicitie, religion and learning I never knew in any one person. . . . I refer people to her funerell sermon."

The portrait of Theophila, Lady Coke, now at Holkham, hardly suggests the extreme loveliness which so ravished her contemporaries. But tastes differ, and fashions change. At any rate, she looks kind and pleasant.

George, Lord Berkeley's, letters to Mrs. Sadleir show that his veneration for his uncle Robert and aunt Theophila was unbounded. They are interesting and not unimportant, for it is to one of them that we owe the knowledge that Sir Robert lived at the place now called "The Durdans," well known as a residence of the late Lord Rosebery, and that he left it to his wife's nephew.

From a deed, now at Berkeley Castle, between Sir Robert Coke and Jerome Reed, plumber, of London, we learn that in 1639 Sir Robert added "a great new Hall or Room," which is surely the building on the right seen in Knyff's view of The Durdance.

The first letter is a pleasant combination of piety, sorrow, and greed.

> "MADAME,
>
> ". . . I stand indebted to your goodness on the receipte of many great favours, besides, I were the unworthiest of men, should I not tender the highest respect to a lady so nearly related (as was yourself)

to my Dearest, best friend, Uncle, and parent, so lately released out of a miserable life . . . for eternal happiness. O happy exchange! I pray God we may be as well prepared for our later ends as he was . . . we can never enough honour the memorie of so good a man!"

"TOOTING,
Aug. 2, 1653.

"I have made bold to write to Mr. Sadleir for a Buck, and humbly entreate you will please to second my request. 'Tis fit for our occasions that the Buck be with us upon Wednesdy by noone or night, the 10th of the present, to be eaten the next day at dinner, our Wedding day."

He got his buck.

"TOOTING,
"*August* 10, 1653.

"MADAME,

"'Tis my dutie to honour the memorie of so indulgent a parent who is now a saint in heaven, in the next place I ought highly to esteem all related to him, especially those that loved him with so entire an affection as did yourselfe. I shall have much cause to be fond of Durdence, not for its sweete situation only, but chiefly for his sake who left it me and so much delighted in it. Whenever it shall please God we shall settle there, you will do us honour if we may be happy in seeing you.

"Be pleased to returne my service to Mr. Sadleir for his very fat Buck, if I may serve him in Glostershire[1] upon the least notice he may command me."

Five years later Mr. George Berkeley succeeded his father as ninth Baron Berkeley (he was created Earl of Berkeley in 1679), and the memory of his uncle Robert Coke and his aunt Theophila is still green with him. Writing to "the truly vertuous Lady, Mrs. Anne Sadleir, at Standon," September 18, 1659, he says:

"The honour I bare to the memorie of that deare Saint and Servant of God, your deare brother my incomparable friend, and most highly affec^{ate} Uncle whom I may more properly tearme Father, so great was his indulgence to me, and to my excellent Aunt (I think I may without vanity tearme her one of the best of the age she lived in). . . .

A nephew by marriage would be highly remiss if he failed to speak well of the uncle who bequeathed him a charming property, but there is no reason to doubt that Lord Berkeley's praises were well deserved. For he is corroborated by no less a person than that famous divine Dr. John Hacket, after the Restoration made Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. This eminent man, deprived by the Parliament of all his rich (and well-deserved) preferments, was, however, allowed to keep the small cure of Cheam, near Epsom, and thus became intimate with the owners of Durdence. He preached Sir Robert's funeral sermon, and Mrs. Sadleir begged him to oblige her with a copy of it. His reply shows that, although hurt and indignant at receiving no honorarium—"not even a black ribband" for his services, he did not allow this slight to diminish his warm feeling of admiration for Sir Robert.

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[1] Mr. Sadleir owned estates no great distance from Berkeley (see p. 66).

"Cheam,
"*Sept.* 5, 1653.

"Madam,

"You wrot to me for a copie of the Sermon which I preacht at the burial (I can scarce call it funerall) of your blessed deceased Brother. I collect my foul notes into a fair written form. I had not done it before, for tho' it would appear in the reading that I took some pains in composing ye Sermon, yet I neglected it after it was delivered in the Church, because I have not had so much as a black ribband bestowed on me in recompence. Yet I would not for a good sum of monie but have performed the dutie that I might not be wanting in my poor industries to so deere a frend. The bodie of that brave man was not brought into the Church of Epsham 'til sev'n at night, wch compell'd me to cut of much of ye Sermon. . . . You have it entire in ye copie sent to you. But as for the application of the Text to Sir Robert, I omitted nothing wch I had prepared." (Mrs. Sadleir is to return the copie, as he wishes it, "with others, to be publisht after his death, if God please, but in no wise before.") "I make you the Judge, Ladie, whether I have not done the good Saint deceased just right, without anie flatterie.

"But afflict not yourself that yr succeeders to yr most worthy Father's estate are not like to contribute honour to his great name and to his familie. It may be that they are yet unborn who shall come out of yt. stock and prove pillars of ye Kingdom; some excellent spriggs are lurking in yr Father's root, or I am much deceived."

It was an unpardonable neglect of the chief mourners. If John Coke, who, as we know, had "blacks" left for him in which to attend the funeral, was mean enough to depart without offering the preacher the usual token of gratitude, then why did not George Berkeley repair the omission? It did not please God that this unrewarded sermon should be "publisht." But Thomas Plume, who, in 1675, edited "A Century of Sermons on several Remarkable Subjects" by Bishop Hacket, states in his Life of the divine that he was usually well recompensed for his sermons, and that " Sir Julius Cæsar never heard him but he sent him a broad piece."

Surely liberal Mrs. Sadleir, when she heard of the niggardly way in which the good doctor had been treated, prayed her husband to send him a buck, or herself administered some " comforts or refreshment " as she had done to old Sir Ranulph Crewe. Evidently she had no good opinion of her brother John and his family, who were the " succeeders " to her father's estate. Did she not assert in her manuscript book that with Sir Robert's death " Glorie has departed from our poore familie "? As we shall see later, she may have had good reason for her judgment. Dr. Hacket's prophecy as to the " spriggs lurking in that root " has happily proved true in later years. Whatever the errors of Sir Robert's earlier life may have been, he seems to have made amends. He was severely punished by imprisonment, and the premature death of his delightful wife. He and his sisters were probably the most pious of all the Cokes, next to their father, who heard the prayers of the Church twice a day.

One of his books is still preserved at Berkeley Castle, a black-letter Prayer-Book with the version of the Psalms by Sternhold and Hopkins, printed in 1635. On its cover is the Coke crest—the ostrich with the horseshoe, in a floriated circle—and the name " Durdans " stamped in gold above it. Lord Berkeley also owns the only possession of Theophila[1] which I know of, except her portrait, which is now at Holkham. This is a book entitled " Nero Cæsar or Monarchie Depraved . . . by the Translator of Lucius Florus, London, Thomas Walkley, 1624." She has written her name, " The. Coke," in beautiful characters, on the title-page.

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[1] For an account of Robert Coke's wedding, see Appendix VII., p. 325.

CHAPTER XII

ARTHUR COKE

(Born at Huntingfield, August 22, 1588; died Bury St. Edmunds, December, 1629. Married, 1608, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir George Waldegrave, Knight, of Hitcham, Suffolk, died November 14, 1627. Both buried at Bramfield, Suffolk.).

OF Arthur, Sir Robert Coke's second surviving son, and his wife, very little is known. He was probably educated at Westminster School, for the eminent scholar Dr. John Wall (born 1588), in the course of his dedication to Sir Edward Coke of a small manuscript volume of Greek and Latin poems, says he was educated with Sir Edward's sons. Wall left Westminster for Christ Church, Oxford, in 1604. The Arthur Cokes lived at Bramfield, Suffolk, and it was Sir Robert Coke, I suppose, who called in the famous statuary, Nicholas Stone, to raise a monument over their grave in the parish church. This is considered to be one of the artist's most beautiful works.

They had five children, of whom the only son, Robert, died young. Of the eldest girl, Elizabeth, we read in a touching letter from her grandfather, Sir Edward Coke (one of the last, perhaps, that the old man wrote) to his lawyer, Mr. John Pepys:

> "Pepis,
>
> "My head is not in case to produce a long letter, a few words to so good and understanding a servant will be sufficient. Young Mr. Ayliffe, the bearer hereof is a Suitor to my grandchild Elizabeth Coke, and his Father will accompany him to you. I will give unto her for her portion £4,000, besides her part in Sir George Waldegrave's land, for their present maintenance, I give you full power to conclude, though these things be not great. And I pray since I have given her £4,000, sell out so much and deliver it to some trusty friend for her use, and so I end this 17th June, 1634.
>
> "Your very loving master,
> "Edward Coke."

On September 3 he was dead.

When the executors held one of their meetings to consider how they might best carry out Sir Edward Coke's wishes with regard to those "poore Infants," his younger grandchildren, some curious, and it seems rather partial, allotments were made. Henry Coke, who, as we have seen, was the only one of the brothers who had not incurred "exorbitant debts," got only £500 apiece for his younger children. Clement's children fared twice as well, though that may have been judged proper because they were orphans. At first £1,000 was allowed for Arthur Coke's youngest daughter, Theophila, and nothing was said about the other three, but at a later conference Mr. Pepys sent the following minute to the executors:

> "Mr. Arthur Coke had four daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth, aged 22, my Lord would give her £4,000, but the marriage not succeeding, and my Lord shortly after dying without further satisfaction of his pleasure, I have foreborne to pay the money, and humbly submit to your Lordship's direction therein.

Mrs. Elizabeth	Aged 22	These to have after Sir George Walgrave's death £200 per annum and on Lady Walgrave's death as much more, and they already have £45 a year given by a kinsman."[1]
Mrs. Mary	Aged 20	
Mrs. Winifred	Aged 14 or 15	
Mrs. Theophila	Aged 7 or 8	

Eventually these children had a good portion from their grandfather's estate. Elizabeth, who married Henry Bing, Esq., £3,000; Mary, who married Richard Naunton, Esq., £1,500; Winifred and Theophila, £1,000 each. In Elizabeth's fine fortune we note the important rank given strictly in those days to the eldest child. In default of heirs-male, Elizabeth and her heirs-male would eventually succeed to the whole Coke estate. Theophila married her cousin Robert, youngest son of Clement Coke. I do not know what became of Mrs. Winifred.

The only letter I know of Arthur Coke's is given by Le Neve. It is a note to Pepys (he spells the name "Peaps") dated August 7, 1627: "Your letter and £30 I received by Stefan, you shall not fail it at Michaelmas." Borrowers generally promise to pay soon and without fail.

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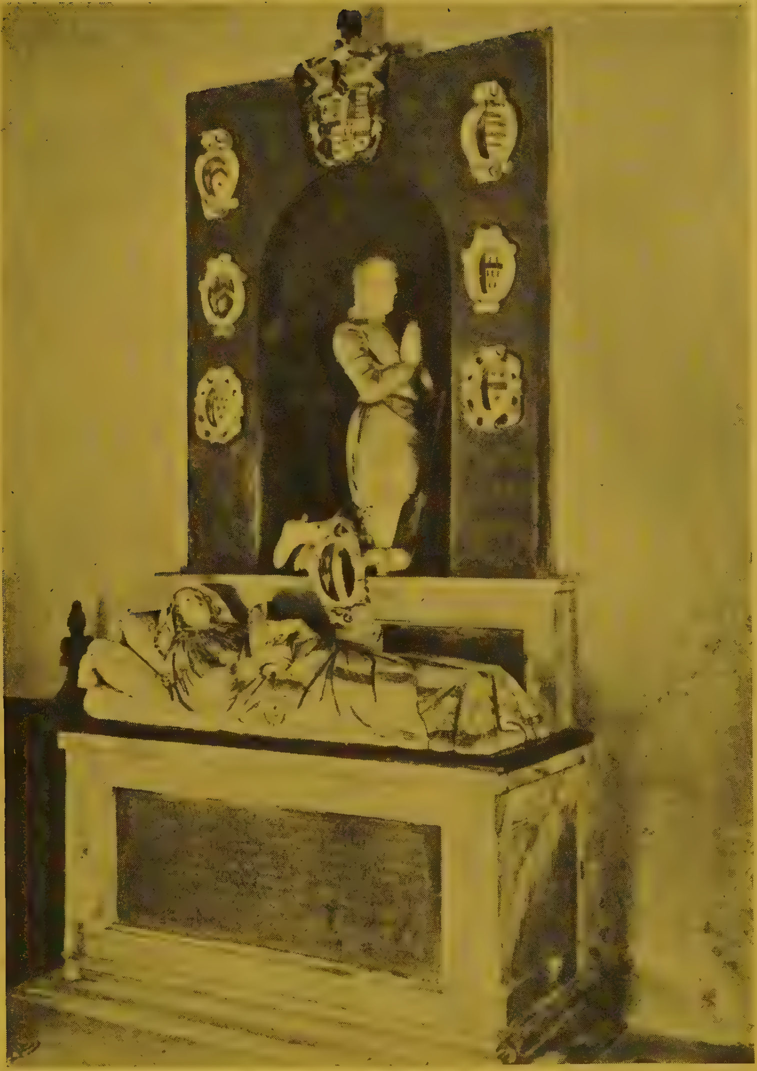
[1] This was perhaps the parson of Thorington and Bramfield, Mr. Gold, who had an estate in Bramfield which he left to Arthur Coke (Davy's MSS.).



ARTHUR COKE'S MONUMENT, BY NICHOLAS STONE,
IN ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, BRAMFIELD.

By permission of the Walpole Society.

JOHN COKE THE ELDER (1590-1661).
"A great fellow, in large folio" (see page 103).
From the portrait by Old Stone, at Holkham.

CHAPTER XIII

JOHN COKE THE ELDER—AT HOLKHAM

(Born May 9, 1590, at Huntingfield; admitted at the Inner Temple, February, 1609-10; buried in Holkham Church, September 10, 1661. Married, 1612, Meriel Wheateley, born 1597, died July 4, 1636; buried at Holkham.)

WHEN Sir Edward Coke bought the manors and lands of the Armigers in and about Holkham, in 1610, he cannot have failed to hear that there was a young lady there, Mrs. Meriel Wheateley, who was sole owner of a manor and a good property in Holkham, and he must have seen at once what a suitable wife she would make for his fourth son, John. Her father, Anthony Wheateley, had died in 1600, so that when the bride was old enough, and the marriage took place, in 1612, the happy pair could begin their life together at their manor house, which was then known as Hill Hall. This ancient dwelling continued to be used as the principal house of the Cokes till about 1750, when Thomas Coke, Lord Leicester, having built himself a palace, needed it no more. So the manor house disappeared, leaving no trace behind it.

Sir Edward Coke, naturally, caused a pedigree of the Wheateleys to be drawn up. He could not trace Meriel farther back than her great-great-grandfather. But her grandfather had held the honourable office of Chief Protonotary to the Court of Common Pleas, and her mother's family, that of the Armigers, was ancient and respectable. Last, but not least, Meriel was a considerable heiress, so she was held worthy to marry a fourth son. She certainly filled the Scriptural ideal of a wife in being abundantly fruitful, for she bore her husband fifteen children. The youngest of these was the cause of her death, and, as we shall see, it had been better for the family if that son had died with his mother. She was buried in Holkham Church, July 6, 1636, and her husband ordered from Nicholas Stone the beautiful tomb which is still to be seen at the eastern end of the southern chapel. This was not only to commemorate his wife and himself, and their children, but her father and mother and grandparents.

On the monument are carefully finished statuettes of William Wheateley and Martha Skinner, his wife; Anthony Wheateley and Anne Armiger, his wife; and John Coke and Meriel Wheateley kneeling on cushions, with desks before them; also the arms of Wheateley, Skinner, Armiger, and Coke. Below are ranged the nine daughters on the left, and the six sons on the right. Most of them are seen in profile, a few turn their heads and look directly at the spectator. It used to be conjectured that these represented children already dead when the monument was made, but on referring to the Register of Burials this explanation is seen to be untenable. Nicholas Stone, perhaps, was not in possession of accurate information about the deaths of the children. That the assistant who executed the monument was one Robert Pook, who could carve but could not sign his name, can be gathered from the entry in Nicholas Stone's account book, but the design was furnished by Stone himself:

> "This iii of June, 1639, agreed with Robert Pook for to work the monement of Mr. John Coke's wyfe of Alabaster and blak marbell accordyng to the plott, 6 foot wyed and 10 foot in hight, and is to pake it up, and is to help shep it away with Sir Edward Coke's monoment, and to sett it up at Holcome in Norfolk for the which he is to have tenne poundes whar off he hath receyved in present the som of twynty shellengs, and £9 mor as the work goes on and shall be set up and fyneshed, the blak marbell to be farly wrought and p'lyshed and glazed in wettness whereof he hath set his hand in the presents of the marke—of Robert Pook.
>
> "Witness by me ANTHONY ELLIS."

Some years after the marriage of John and Meriel they found it possible to buy another property in Holkham—namely, the Manors of Holkham and of Burgh Hall. These had been the property of the famous Sir Thomas Gresham. His widow, Anne Ferneley, Lady Gresham, had left it to her son, by her first husband, Sir William Rede. John Coke, with perhaps some help from his father, bought this property from the Redes.

But the Wheateley property seems to have been by a good deal the largest in the parish.

Among his correspondents there is a pleasant cousin, Mr.

Stubbe, of Strumpshaw, evidently an agent or a man of business, and on friendly terms with Mr. Coke, signing himself, "your humble kinsman." His mother had been a sister of Sir Edward Coke. In 1631, writing about the evidences of Holkham Parsonage, and boundaries of tithable land, he humorously complains that "the pattridges flutter about his ears in the fields and disturb his serious meditations," and he wishes Mr. Coke would come with his hawks "to quiet them." He is fond of Meriel and takes an interest in her garden. "Now I come to the business that concerns the noble Lady of Holkham, that ould true friend of myne. I have spoken to one William Arnold, who is a very good gardener, an honest man to come to Holkham." In another letter written "this 22 August at seaven o'clock at night ready to put my feet into the stirrups," he says: "I have a neighbour with me that is an excellent gardener. I shall write you word when he can come to Holkham to trimm up your garden."

On October 10, 1632, John has to crave his old father's help and direction in a question of legal right. Two tenants of Sir Philip Parker's—a map of the estates made in 1590 shows that this gentleman owned some land where Scarborough Clump now offers its deceitful shelter to the trusting pheasant—have not paid their lawful tithe on hay and corn. There has already been a trial about this which John Coke won. But still these farmers ignore the verdict, and pay the tithe to Sir Philip and to the Rectory of Burnham Overy.

> "The bearer will inform your lordship how many loads of wheat, rie, oats and vetches grown at Burnham Overy were carried away untithed by the defendents. I proffered peace to them, but they are such unquiet spirits, that they will not heare on that syde. Therefore . . . I must flie into Chancerie, the more so that the witnesses are very aged and also some of the ancient settled dools[1] are lately privately and most Lewdly removed by the defendents council and advice."

His lordship returned the letter to his son, having written his notes in the margin, and ended: "Thank my good daughter for her excellent cakes and honey, which came in good time." That is almost the only glimpse we get of Meriel in her home and her stillroom. Next year, 1633, the peccant farmers, Jubbin and Smith, have submitted about "your lordship's Burnham Overy tithe."

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[1] Dole, or dool—a boundary or landmark consisting of a stone, or an unploughed strip of land ("Oxford English Dictionary").

John Coke, then, grew wheat on his estate. It has been too generally believed that the success of Holkham agriculture dates only from 1775. But Norfolk was eminently a corn-growing county in 1633. In that year John Coke, with other landowners, signed a petition to the Privy Council on behalf of themselves and the tilth-masters of the champaign part of Norfolk. They complained that the tilth-masters were unable to dispose of their corn because of recent orders and proclamations, and they desire to have free trade in corn. Mr. Mason ("History of Norfolk," p. 291) says that 60,000 coombs were almost yearly sold in three small hundreds on the coast; and in some years £30,000 had been taken in "outlandish Gold between Lynn and Wells for corn to be exported" (see p. 264).

I have never been able to discover how the legend arose that in the eighteenth century "Not a blade of wheat was to be seen between Wells and Lynn," unless witty Audry Townshend's thoughtless remark about the "one blade of grass and the two rabbits fighting for it" be the foundation.

CHAPTER XIV

JOHN COKE THE ELDER—THE CIVIL WAR

DURING the Civil War John Coke, together with the great majority of Norfolk gentlemen, inclined to the side of the Parliament. His brother Robert, as we have seen, and his brother Henry, as we shall see, were Cavaliers, and suffered accordingly. But in earlier days, John, like them, was loyal to Charles I., as the following letter to Sir John Hobart[1] shows. It was written in 1634:

"NOBLE SIR,

"I had been on my journey to Norwich if not visited with sickness, but uppon the receipt of your letter, dated the 24 of this month, I sent awaie my servant home both to demand my armes and also the tenne shillings a man formerly promised, for this, if it may be had, will greatly encourage the soldiers. I direct my warrant for the mustering of my men, and to the uttermost of my power ther shall noe care be wanting in me to perform to my fidelity that which concerns the welfare of the King, Church and State, but I humbly desire further directions from you. . . .

"JOHN COKE."

Nine years later John is in correspondence with the officers of the army of the Eastern Counties Association which worked for the Roundheads' cause in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge, Essex, and Hertfordshire, and the great name of Cromwell is mentioned to him as if it were quite an ordinary matter:

To JOHN COKE, ESQ.

"NOBLE SIR,

I received your loveing lines and am heartily sorry that the warrant came soe late to your hands, yet all is well, for this day I received a letter from Colonell Cromwell to reside here three or four days untill the cuirassieres could come in. The warrant was dispatched in haste, the only cause of omitting to request a month's pay or advance money. Sir, your servant shall have the best instructions that I can give for the use of his horse and armes which is the best service at this time that I can do you, and if you have further imployment be not nice to command your servant

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[1] Sir John Hobart (1593-1647), second Baronet of Blickling.

"ROBERT RICH.

"THETFORD,
"28 *March*, 1643.

"Present my humble service to Sir Isaac Astley,[1] whose horse I shall be glad to see."

Robert Rich was one of Cromwell's officers. In the MSS. library at Holkham (Codex 677) there is an original letter signed by Oliver Cromwell ordering the Chief Constable of the Hundred of Holt to give warning to all such in their hundred as found cuirassiers under the command of Sir William Paston to appear at Thetford March 27, 1643, "completed to march away under command of Capt. Robert Rich for the defence of the country."

John Coke was a member of the Association and sat upon many of its committees—on that, for instance, appointed to sequester the estates of "delinquents." This cannot have been a pleasant task, for some of the offenders were his personal friends. Being in Lynn at the time when the Royalists there were in power, "Maister Coke" was arrested, and only released when the town capitulated to the Earl of Manchester. Among his papers are a letter addressed to the Association from Derby House, January 17, 1644, and a paper of instructions for local guidance:

GENT.,

We have received your letter of the 14th instant and therein an evidence of your care to promote the publicke affayres by yr expiditious dispatch of the men you have now sent out, and the good provision you have made for them for their subsistence abroad. wch we cannot but account acceptable service, and a further continuance of the good affection for wch we return you thanks, and doubt not but that with the like readiness you will assist and expedite these Recrutes that are to be made for ye E. of Manchester in the Association, for which you will receive order from his lordship: and especially and that immediately for the two regiments of Colonell Sir Myles Hobart,[2] and

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[1] Sir Isaac Astley, second son of Isaac Astley of Melton Constable: created a baronet, 1641, married Bridget, eldest daughter of John Coke, died 1659.

[2] Sir Myles Hobart, second son of Sir Henry Hobart, first Baronet of Blickling.

Colonell Montague, wch regiments are now at Henly. Therefore we desire you yt as you can get 100 or 200 men ready to send them to Henly, there being no danger in the way, until each of their regiments be recruted with 500 men; we herein desire that all expedition may be used, and yt for the more easy leavying of the men, and their better agreement in the army, we recommend it to you to have been leavyed in those places from whence those regiments have been leavyed, and do use to be recruted.

"Signed in ye name and by ye warrant of the Committee of both Kingdomes by your very loving friendes

WHARTON.[1] LOWDEN.

For the Committee of
The association sitting
at Camb.

"DERBY HOUSE,
"17 *Jan,* 1644."

The long and very interesting letter about Crowland and Donnington Castle which follows was written to John Coke by Sir Valentine Pell:

"To my noble friend, John Coke, High Sheriff of Norfolk, Holkham Hall."

Incidentally it shows that the name of the house, "Hill Hall," had been changed to Holkham Hall since Mr. and Mrs. Coke became owners of nearly the whole parish.

"NOBLE SIR,

"I can send you little news sithence your departure from home but that I conceive you know allready the newes of the surrender of Tinmouth Castle being confirmed by a Wells shipp lately come to Wells from Castle, wch being soe neare to you I hope you have allready heard, onely the newes from Sir John Hobart sent from Norwich uppon Sunday last in a postscript in his letter in these words: The Lord Forth, alias Earl of Brainford,[2] generall to his majestie is come into the Parliament, Dunnington Castle[1] surrendered, 20 pieces of Ordnince, all baggage and carriages of the King. This newes is sithence contradicted by one Mr. Atkins of Boston, who came on Monday last in the afternoon from London affirming that Sir Anthony Irbie[2] told him on Sunday last in London that Donnington Castle was not then taken, and the said Atkins further affirmed that in the way to Linn, uppon Newmarkett Heath, he did meete with a troop that came lately from the Army who maketh the former relation of Dunnington Castle to be true, and that then there came a stranger to them in the way who said that he came from our army before Dunnington being then untaken, but upon ply [parley] to surrender, they in the castle being willing to surrender soe as they may goe away with bagg and baggage, whereunto our army will condescend noe further than to give free quarter unto them.

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[1] Probably Philip, fourth Baron Wharton (1613-96). Educated at Exeter College, Oxford. His regiment was routed at Edgehill, and "for the rest of the war he confined himself to his Parliamentary duties." He was a member of the Committee of Both Kingdoms. Disapproved the Execution of the King and welcomed the Restoration.

[2] Patrick Ruthven, Earl of Forth and Brentford (1573-1651). Served under Gustavus Adolphus for many years, celebrated for his powers of withstanding the effects of intoxicating liquor. Fought for the King at Edgehill and Newbury, and was wounded there. "While lying exhausted at Donnington Castle, Colonel Urry sought to persuade him to join the Parliamentary party, but his overtures were rejected with scorn" (D.N.B.).

"The fortified boats here go on slowly. We have provided biskett butter and chease for the soulders against Crowland,[3] a pound of biskett, a qter of a pound of butter, a pound of chease, and two quarts of beare a man a day, and soe in proportion for 300 men will come in three weeks to £100 but I hope this excessive charge will be taken off; in regard it appears by Captain Buck his letter sent to us yesterday that our scouts cannot heare that Crowlanders have had any releife in those parts about Dowsdale, and that Captain Fisher did come lately from Spalding, who informed that the Crowlanders are in great want, and that their souldiers do mutinie for want of bread, and that not above ninety of them will stand to theire armes, and that although the Governor had promised they should want noe bread, yet they answered that they had been too long fed with words, and that five of them that were uppon their duties did run away, and that there was one offered twenty shillings to bring them a bushel of sault. It seems further by the report of Captaine Fisher that they have not any more corne in the towne than nine bushels wch uppon search was found hidden up by a poore man, and that also there did come a Drummer from Crowland to Spalding who was at his first coming very forward and peart, but hearing that the forces wch came to theire releife were defeated, grew very dejected. I must not forget the news of the said Mr. Atkins of Boston, who affermeth that certaine news was brought to London of the surrender of Leverpoole. The whole Committee do thankfully accept of your present of Artichokes, and tender with myself their and my best respects to you by the hand of your servant and faithful friend

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[1] Donnington Castle, besieged by the Earl of Manchester early in November, 1644. It did not surrender, and was relieved by the King on November 9. So Mr. Atkins' information was correct.

[2] Sir Anthony Irbie, Knight, M.P., and Recorder of Boston.

[3] Crowland, an ancient town in the Fens, celebrated for its Abbey. Had been twice seized by the Royalists. It was besieged by the soldiers of the Eastern Association, October, 1644. Four hundred of them against "a small band of 250 Cavaliers with 25 horse within the little citadel upon the waters, but the prospect was not hopeful even with such a force." The town having suffered extremities for want of bread surrendered in the first week of December. The Horse were allowed to march with their swords and pistols, the Foot had to leave their arms behind and march away to Newark. ("East Anglia and the Civil War," by Alfred Kingston, pp. 178, 181.)

"VALENTINE PELL.

"LINN REGE,
"*7th November,* 1644.

"I do not know how this Committee will be supplied this weeke unless you and Sir Edward Astley[1] afford his and your assistance; thereof I desire you not to faile us.

"Since the writing of this letter there is newes come from Benercastle sent by Colonell Rainborow[2] where we are given to understand that those forces unsurprised at our last defeate flying thither are beleaguered there and that we have had a hott service there, yett not above tenne men slaine, and twenty wounded on our part, and we have taken of theires one Captaine and diverse prisoners, driven all the rest into the Castle, burned the towne, all theire hay and corne there, being not above tenne houses in the towne and in this manner doth the Castle now stand beleaguered. The messenger from Colonell Rainborow affermeth that as he did come by that he heard it reported that the women and children at Crowland did cry out for food. I must not forget to tell you that uppon Tuesday last a Crowland troop was issued out and gotten a bullock, driveing the same uppon the banks towards Crowland, and that one of Captain Luskin his souldiers uppon sight thereof did mount himself and with a case of pistolls did ride after him and took the bullock from him and brought it to Dowsdale and presentlie killed it and made his quarter merry withal. The Governor of Linn hath one come to him from the Earle of Manchester[3] affirming that he did see the Earle of Brainford, the King's Generall, after that he had surrendered himself to the King and Parliament but that the Castle of Dunnington was not yet taken or surrendered.

"There meeteth tomorrow night at Spalding Colonell Rainborow and divers of theire Committee with the Governor of Linn[4] and Capt. Robt. Jermine to consult of ye public affairs and safety."

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[1] Edward Astley, younger brother of Sir Isaac Astley.

[2] Colonel Rainborow, died 1648. At first in the Navy; at Crowland, 1644, the regiment which he raised in the Earl of Manchester's army was largely officered by returned emigrants from New England. His sister Martha married Governor James Winthrop. He was captured by the Cavaliers and mortally wounded at Doncaster.

[3] Edward Montagu, second Earl of Manchester (1602-1671). Elected, in 1643, Major-General of the Associated Counties, since "the fortunes of the Parliamentary forces in the Eastern Counties had been seriously imperriled by local quarrels." He opposed the trial of King Charles, and greatly welcomed the Restoration. The second of his five wives was Anne, daughter of Robert Rich, second Earl of Warwick, whose portrait by Vandyke is at Holkham.

[4] Governor of Lynn, Colonel Valentine Walton, brother-in-law and companion in arms of Cromwell. Signed warrant for the King's

I can find no evidence that John Coke was a violent partisan. It is said, indeed, that he kept up a friendship with the deprived Bishop of Norwich, Joseph Hall (Mrs. Sadleir's "our English Senaca"). Mr. Mason ("History of Norfolk") quotes a story that "when the Bishop, in 1643, was on a visit to Mr. Coke of Norfolk, the servants called him 'His Holiness,' imagining him to be the English Pope." He looks martial enough, in his portrait attributed to Old Stone, but we do not hear of his taking the field in person. He contributes to the pay of the soldiers and sends them presents of "Hartichokes" (the vegetable of which his father was so fond), but it seems probable that, in common with so many of the country gentlemen, he revolted against the execution of the King, and was ready to welcome the Restoration. For he was one of those nominated to be a Knight of Charles II.'s "Order of the Royal Oak," and would then have been Sir John Coke for the few remaining months of his life, had the proposed order been actually established.

It is to his credit that he was fond of books, and added to the library which had been formed by his father, the Chief Justice, which descended to him on the death, in 1653, of his brother Sir Robert. In 1658, his servant Berry (the same who was to call for the "blacks" at the draper's in Paul's Churchyard) writes to him: "By the post I have sent you the books you last writ for, but as for the books that Beaumont should help you to I cannot get them." A bookseller's bill survives sent in a letter from "your obliged friend and servant, Octavian Pulleyn, London, August 21, 1654." Mr. Pulleyn recommends Mr. Coke some "Socinian pieces."

John had but seven years' enjoyment of the revenues of the "Grand Estate" of the Cokes. He was sixty-three when he succeeded—a considerable age in those times—and of his six sons, only one was alive, a youth of seventeen. Of his nine daughters all were married or dead but two; so it is possible that the "enjoyment" was not very great. He does not seem to have been an agreeable or a popular man. In a curious little MS. (Harl. 6395) at the British Museum, a compilation

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execution. Escaped to Flanders and died in 1661, "his end occasioned by disappointment and dread of a violent death" (Noble, quoted by Kingston, "East Anglia and the Civil War," p. 380).

of "Merry Passages and Jests," attributed to Sir Nicholas Lestrange, there are references to John Coke.

For instance, "One said of him, in regard to his loud vociferation and bawling at all conferences and meetings, 'What an eminent man will this grow, if he be long lived, whose reports allready so far exceed his Father's!'" Like Sir Toby, he spoke "without any mitigation or remorse of voice."

"A gentleman was telling his friend that he heard Mr. Jo. Coke say he did believe his Father was as positive a wise man as was upon the Earth: and 'truly,' says the other (W. G.), 'the son is as privative a wise man as any I know.'" He meant that John was the very opposite of a wise man. Another "jest" about John refers to his stature: "he was a great fellow, in large folio."

Sir Edward Coke had done his best to lay secure foundations for a rich and splendid race of Cokes. He had made money, and had become a territorial magnate of the first class ; he had begotten six sons, and strictly entailed the major part of his possessions on his heirs-male. But it seemed as though Fate mocked his efforts. His three eldest sons failed to produce an heir-male. John, the fourth, though he had fifteen children, of whom six were sons, saw five of these sons dead in his lifetime, and the sixth, who did live to succeed him, died childless. Clement, Sir Edward's youngest son, had grandsons who eventually might have succeeded to the whole property, but they too died childless, and so that line came to an end. Had it not been that Henry, the Chief Justice's fifth son, succeeded in transmitting the blood of the Cokes through heirs-male to Thomas Coke, first Earl of Leicester, and his sister, Mrs. Roberts (from whom the present race of Cokes descends), the Chief Justice's cherished hopes of "founding a family" would have been totally extinguished a hundred years after his death, unless it could be proved that in 1727 there was an heir living descended through a female line.

John Coke's eldest son, Edward, was born December 19, 1613, and went to Trinity College, Cambridge, as Fellow Commoner in 1631. He married Elisabeth, daughter of George, Lord Berkeley (brother to his aunt Theophila, Sir Robert Coke's wife), and died in 1655. She died in 1661.

That they had a son born in 1646 we know from Sir Robert Coke's letter to Mrs. Sadleir (see p. 83). I know nothing of this child except that it was born and died, nor if any others were born. Edward, son of John, was probably the worst of the Cokes. The terrible pages of Mr. Carthew's "Hundred of Launditch" (Part III., p. 541 and onwards), must be read by those who would know more about the sordid story of his iniquities. It must suffice to say here that when his father, John Coke, succeeded in 1653 to the great Coke estates, Edward, his eldest son, "was found to have incurred debts to the amount of upwards of £40,000, and divers judgments, recognisances, and post-obit securities of his were in the hands of the great usurer, Hugh Awdley." John Coke was then obliged to surrender to Mr. Awdley the fine estate at North Elmham, which his father had bought in 1598 from Edward, Lord Crumwell, giving £6,200 for it. Little more than the park was saved from the clutches of the usurer, and those acres are still in the possession of the family. Mr. Shirley in his book on Deer Parks mentions "the venerable park of North Elmham, disparked in 1844, the deer being removed to Holkham."

By what other means John Coke managed to satisfy his son's creditors, I have been unable to ascertain precisely, nor yet what was the nature of the young fool's extravagance. But it cannot be doubted that John's property had to be heavily mortgaged. Edward died in London, but lies buried under the same great stone that covers his youngest brother in Holkham Church. His wife's death, in 1661, is commemorated on a tablet which records the virtues and death of her father, George, Lord Berkeley, in Cranford Church, Middlesex. It says that she was buried at Heigham, near Norwich.

John, the second son, born 1614, died at the age of nineteen. Robert, the third son, born 1616, went to King's College, Cambridge, as a Fellow Commoner, Easter, 1634, and was admitted at the Inner Temple, November, 1636. He died, and was buried in the Temple Church, January, 1644, "under Mr. Clement Coke's monument next the great chest at the upper end of the Inner Temple Syde, next the great stone."

The next nine children to be born were girls. Finally there came three more sons, of whom only the youngest survived: Anthony, born 1631, died an infant; Thomas, born 1634, died 1635; John, born 1636, died August, 1671.

* * * * *

So John Coke, first of Holkham, died and was buried by the side of his faithful Meriel. He is not an attractive Coke. He looks glum and repellent in Old Stone's portrait; he could not manage his children; he seems to have liked Socinian books; he was obstinate and foolish, we remember, about the £5,000 left by the kind old grandfather for his twelve children. His sister Anne Sadleir evidently had no high opinion of him, for she thought that when Sir Robert died, "the glorie had departed from our poore family." Dear old Sir Ranulph Crewe could not get on with him at all. In that letter in which he jogged Mrs. Sadleir's memory about her promise of "tulipps," he had said:

> "Your Brother John was with me, we seldom meet but a storm arises; att a second meetinge it was somewhat allayed. The portion of 5000^{1} which he refused to take and to geve security to save the Executors harmless . . . the money lying idle and unprofitable by his wyllfulness, now att last lett out to the Chamber of London for 7^{1} in the hundred . . . he may have all this, for ought I know principall and interest, for his children; and therein he may prejudice his children. But of all men I have to do with I can least accord with him from whom I can gett no reason but only wyll."

Nevertheless, peace to his ashes. He was the first Coke to live at Holkham, and he was not the only Coke who has been credited with the kind of "wyll" which some would describe by a harsher name.

CHAPTER XV

JOHN COKE THE YOUNGER—A FOOLISH COKE

(Born 1636; succeeded his father in the Coke Estates, 1661; died unmarried, August 1, 1671.)

YOUNGEST sons, I suppose, are not always weak-minded, but this one, who was a fifteenth child, must have been a singularly foolish, easily swayed person. As we have seen, he, alone of the six sons, was alive when his father died in 1661, so he succeeded to the estates of the Cokes, encumbered as they were, by reason of Sir Robert's, and his own eldest brother's, vast debts. He may not have been quite so extravagant as that good-for-nothing person; still, he managed to throw away a considerable portion of the family goods, and in a very exasperating fashion.

When quite a young man he had made a close friend of one Andrew Fountaine, who, trading on his weak affection, got large sums of money from him on the perpetual plea that on one occasion he had saved him from drowning. Indeed, Fountaine seems to have played the part of Captain Rook to John Coke's Pigeon for the greater part of his life. Much of this story is unfolded in certain copies of documents, now at Holkham, used in various lawsuits which John Coke's heir, Robert Coke, and after Robert Coke's death the trustees of his son, found it necessary to bring against Fountaine and the executors of John Coke's Will.

At different times Fountaine fleeced poor John of—

1. A rent charge of £1,000 a year on the Manors of Flitcham, Amner, Appleton, and Minster Lovel.
2. Two leases for forty-nine years—one of Farnham Royal, the other of Mileham.
3. A bond for £5,000 to be paid on his father's death.
4. Before 1668, "great sums of money, above £20,000, for which nine releases were given."

From the beginning of their friendship until a year and a half before John Coke's death, Fountaine was chief manager of all his concerns. A great deal of money was bequeathed to him by a Will of which he was sole executor, and John entrusted him with his "writings," which included the General Settlement of Estates made by his father and the deeds of the rent charge.

About 1670, John and his friend began to differ. At first a quarrel might not have been serious. John writes kindly to him, saying that he is very sick, but that he is glad he has lived long enough to see his friend married and settled, and will Fountaine be so good as to send him the writings, his will, and the deeds of rent charge? To this Fountaine replied insolently: "Do you think I carry your writings about with me? They are in Hertfordshire, and I am in Norwich." He refused to surrender the documents, or delayed doing so until John had such urgent need of them that he offered to make Fountaine an annuity of £800 a year if he would hand the deeds over. The pressing occasion was this. John thought of marrying, and made his proposals to the daughter—a "very fine woman and a vast fortune"—of a certain Lady Crispe. That prudent parent desired to inspect her proposed son-in-law's papers, in order to satisfy herself of his wealth or solvency. It was his fear of losing the lady (and he did lose her) that made John ready to bribe Fountaine to give up the documents. I am inclined to think that Fountaine never gave them up in John's lifetime. But if he did, it was too late, for by that time Lady Crispe "had other views" for her beautiful and well-dowered daughter.

Reports of the lawsuits brought against Fountaine by Robert Coke's trustees show that this crafty person got at least £20,000 out of his friend, and laid claim to a good deal of land. But eventually justice as to the land was done, and it returned to the possession of the Cokes. Andrew Fountaine thus made "a very good thing" out of this poor-spirited John Coke, for there never was any recovery of the "hard cash."

But if John Coke the Younger was yielding to his "friend" Fountaine, he could be harsh and hard enough to his brother-in-law, Sir Nicholas Lestrange, of Hunstanton. In 1657, John Coke the Elder had lent the sum of £3,985 to his son-in-law Sir Nicholas, and the money had not been repaid in 1664, when the debtor writes to his brother-in-law

John Coke the Younger, pleading for time and mercy. He says he can and will repay £2,500, and give security for another £1,000, "but if you be pleased to deale soe harshly by me, I know the worst, I must go to Gaol, to which I hope you will never bring me."

Among John Coke's letters to his steward Savory is a specimen of a "Deputation of Sporting Rights," which is interesting.

By the Game Laws (not repealed until 1832) the right of sporting over a manor was confined to the lord thereof, unless he "deputed" his right. Thus, in Miss Austen's "Persuasion," when Admiral Croft was prepared to rent Kellynch Hall, Mr. Shepherd tells Sir Walter Elliot that the Admiral "would be glad of the deputation," a remark which has puzzled many readers.

"FOR WM. POOLEY, MY SERVANT.

"You are hereby impowered to take into your Care and Cognizance the Royalty and Liberties of my Manor of Panworth Hall and those of Holkham and Peterston, for Fowling, Hawking, and Fishing belonging to the said Manors, soe farr as by Custom and Ancient Right or Usage it hath been knowne, or you can otherwise be informed, the privilege of the said Manors Doe extend. You are to preserve them as much as in you lyes from all abuses and encroachments. If you happen to find any man Fowling, Hawking, or Fishing within the precincts of these Manors, you are hereby authorized to seize their Guns, Netts, or Dogg, or otherwise within one weeke after such trespass committed to give in theire name and place of their abode to Christopher Savory my Steward. You have likewise hereby granted you full and Free privilege of Fowling, Hawking and Fishing . . . at yr owne times, and for soe doing this shall be yr warrant. Given under my hand and seale, Jany. 1, 1666.

"JOHN COKE."

John the Younger was something of a *gourmet.*

"SAVORYE,

"Godwilling I shall be at home on Saturday night, therefore I charge you not to faile of a fatt bucke to meet me there. . . . I am yr loving master

"JOHN COKE.

"*Sep.* 2, 1667."

Savory would have to fetch the buck from Elmham. In 1666, Lord Townshend reminds John Coke of a promise to give him some "Deere towards the furnishing of my little parke," and says he has received many neighbourly kindnesses from him, and always found him "free of his flock." So John, like many other weak people, seems to have been an easy, even generous, neighbour.

Many letters came to Savory from tradesmen, the Fortnum and Masons of their time, offering "delicacies for the table." Mr. Taylor sends down "22 lbs of anchovies, and but one of capers." Never in his life have capers been so scarce, but more are expected, "if the Turkes do not meet with them." In another letter "Hams are very dear because they are prohibited." One asks, Why? This time he has very good olives, capers, caviare, tongues, and "basketts" of fine salt. "Shuger" is twenty shillings a "Kegg." He can also supply good "Parmezan Cheese," and small gherkins, "which the vulgar call cowcumbers." Later he presents Mr. Coke with a Westphalian ham: "You must let it be spent very sudenly, because it will not keep long being so large."

Savory has correspondents of his own.

Agriculturists will sympathise with Mr. Barnes, of Cretfield, who writes, in 1670, of his farm:

> "It is impoverished for want of good husbandry, the ditches being soe full for want of scouring that the water have not pashes to goe, which makes the ground soe could. . . . As to the meadow ground I should have Letten to your New Tenants, he doe not bid me a marke an acre for 15 acres of the best land, and as for the Haye scarce so much as it cost for mowing and making. . . . The tenne Scots are indifferent good beefe, and I pray you let me know whether you intend to spend them at Holkham, or I shall sell them. The Linckonshyre bullocks will not yett be Redie. . . . I think it better to kepe them till they be better Beefe."

The Knightleys of Donwell, who had the receipt for spruce beer, would have been useful friends for our next correspondent, poor Mr. George Wortley:

> "MASTER SAVORY,
>
> "After my sarvice presented, I make bould to trouble you that is to pray you to send me two bottels of Pine Ale, and 2 bottels of your old beare, my condition is such—God help me—that I cannot tell what to get that I can either eat or drink, but . . . I desire a Joynt of your mutton it being so scarce I cannot get it for money, and this is all at present from
>
> "Yr servant
> "GEO. WORTLEY."

A more cheerful letter reaches Mr. Savory from Mr. Peter Watt, who wants his colt taken up, and his "pyebald Colt" taken great care of, "for if I loose him, I lose all":

> "My wife doubts not but you are mindful for a Dogge for her . . . with respects to Mr. Jones and Mounseer . . . I pray you gett me 2 barrels of Oysters if reasonable, let them be of the largest size, and I shall pay you with thankes."

Who was Mounseer? Perhaps he was Monsieur Jacques Roque, chef, or valet, to Mr. Coke. His name survives in a prescription, sent him on the same sheet as one for Savory. Being a refined Frenchman he is ordered an elegant "Confection," while poor Savory is to have gruel-broth with powders in it, pills, draughts and what not, suitable to a ruder Briton's stomach.

Turning from the trivialities of provincial letter-writers, we find among John Coke's correspondents two very distinguished men—the great Lord Clarendon, and the admirable Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Chief Justice had bought the advowson of the parish of Cleeve in Gloucestershire from Sir Christopher Hatton. It was a "plum" of the richest kind, worth £600 a year even in Charles II.'s time. In 1665, Lord Clarendon begged John Coke to present to this living—

> "The Good old Bishop of Gloucester Dr. William Nicholson, who wants not many years of being fower score yeares old, so that it is very probable you will very soon have the disposal of it againe, and in the meantime oblige a very grave and pious Prelate to pray for you, and to support himself in his very poore Bishoprick the more comfortably, and I shall present two or three such persons as you shall recommend to the first livings which shall fall in my disposal [as Lord Chancellor] in Norfolke or Suffolke or any other Countye you shall choose. . . . You will oblige a very good man . . . and you will provide very well for that parish for I am confident the Bishopp will spend most part of his time there. You will lay a perpetuall obligation on your affectionate servant.
>
> "CLARENDON.
>
> "WORCESTER HOUSE,
> "11 *May*, 1665."

John was suspicious, and at first refused. But Lord Clarendon persevered, and in December had the satisfaction of knowing that the good Bishop was presented to Cleeve. He writes very gratefully to Mr. Coke, but remarks: "It is a great pitty that they who have so long enjoyed such an ample Patrimony as that Parsonage, should leave the House in soe ill a Condition that nobody can live in it."

Finally the Archbishop writes from All Souls, Oxon, New Year's Day, 1665-66: "I had long before this time made you my acknowledgments of your late generous favour to my Lord of Gloucester, had it not pleased God to visit me with a sharp fitt of sickness, from which I am yet but tenderly recovered. He and I and the Church are much obliged to you for it. And you have this to thanke yourselfe, that, besides the doing good to a good old man, whose prayers you have purchased by a meritorious kindness, you have done an action of so much Nobleness that carries along with it its own Reward, and cannot but make you the better pleased with yourselfe for doing it. . . ."

It appears from the "Dictionary of National Biography" that Dr. Nicholson was indeed a very worthy and learned man, and a good Bishop. He survived till 1672, so that John Coke was dead before Bishop's Cleeve was again vacant. The living was eventually sold by the first Lord Leicester.

Of the last illness of John the Younger, I know nothing, nor whether he made an edifying end. He was laid to rest, poor, foolish man, under the floor of the south chapel of Holkham Church, in sight of the monument by Stone to his parents; and St. Withiburga, patroness of that ancient house of prayer, has him in her keeping. With him disappeared the last male of John and Meriel Coke's line. I suppose that he could have left the property in Holkham that came with his mother to whom he chose, but, with some vexatious exceptions, he left it, with the "Grand Estate" of the family, to his cousin Robert, son of Richard, eldest son of Henry, fifth son of the Chief Justice, who was undoubtedly the heir-male, and who thus brought Henry Coke's estate (estimated at £2,000 a year) into the "Grand Estate" of the family.

To Henry Coke, then, let our attention be turned.

CHAPTER XVI

HENRY COKE—A STOUT CAVALIER

(Fifth son of Chief Justice Coke and Bridget Paston: born at Huntingfield, 1591; married Margaret, daughter and heiress of Richard Lovelace, of Kingsdown, Kent; she died before 1656. Lived at Thorington, Suffolk; buried there November 18, 1661.)

HENRY COKE is, in one sense, the most important of the Chief Justice's six sons, for it is through him that the present race of Cokes trace their descent from that eminent man. The line comes directly to the present heir-male, Thomas William Coke, third Earl of Leicester (of the second creation), who was born 1847. We met with Henry at Huntingfield in 1597, when, as a little boy of five, his father "tipped" him two shillings on the return to London from Godwick. Most mothers in our days would refuse to part with their children, but it seems that Bridget kept only Anne, her eldest girl, and Clement, the baby, with her in London, the other small people being entrusted to some worthy folk in the country, perhaps to the parson of Huntingfield, who could act as their tutor. Henry went from Westminster School to Queens' College, Cambridge, as a Fellow Commoner, in 1607, and was admitted at the Inner Temple, February, 1609-10. Of course, his father found an heiress to be his wife—Margaret Lovelace, who brought a good estate in Kent; and he gave him a property at Thorington in Suffolk, not a great distance from Huntingfield. Henry had a numerous family, and was a wealthy and substantial squire, who might have led a pleasant life in less troubled times. In Tanner's Collection in the Bodleian we read:

> "1655, this yeare in Thorington liveth Henry Coke Esq . . . his estate £1,500 to £2,000 per ann."

His mother-in-law, Mrs. Jane Lovelace, appears to have lived at Thorington, for she died and was buried there in 1630. By her Will she left £800 to her eldest grandson, Richard

Coke; £100 to a younger grandson, Ciriac; and the residue to the remaining children.

Like his sister Anne, and his brother Robert, Henry Coke was a stanch Cavalier, and enjoyed the society of a good Royalist. For not only did he give the living of Thorington to Anne's friend, the famous Dr. Pearson (author of "Pearson on the Creed"), but from 1648 to 1650 he gave refuge in his house to another eminent and persecuted divine—Doctor Edward Martin, Dean of Ely, and President of his old College, Queens', who lived there, securely, under the assumed name of Matthews. I should like to know why Anne Sadleir had not a higher opinion of her brother Henry, as stout a Cavalier, as generous a protector of deprived ministers, as she was herself, and as we shall see, a Royalist ready to suffer for his principles. Yet she wrote that "Glorie had departed from our poor familie" when her brother Robert died. Surely she must have heard well of him from Dr. Pearson? And she ought to have taken an interest in Thorington Church, to whose steeple her dear father and mother had given a bell in 1591, "done upon the condicion that neyther the Churchwardens nor any of the inhabitants . . . should at any time after the aforesaid guift selle awaye the said Bell, but continue and maintayne the same for the Callinge together of the inhabitants of the said Towne to divine Service and other Seemly uses." This bell still calls the people of Thorington to church. Henry gave to the church in 1660, no doubt as a thank-offering for the King's Restoration, a flagon and alms-dish of silver, still in use, and engraved, "To God and his Service, By Henry Coke Esq. 1660."

That he was a kindly man may be judged from a document, dated 1627, which recites the gift of "One Cottage and Garden measuring about one acre in the parish of Thorington" to Mary and Margaret Man, because of their "good and carefull nursing of his son Ciriac and his daughter Brigett."

That he could take trouble and thought for his kindred is shown by two letters in his handwriting. The first is about a debt of £370 "for goods bought at Huntingfield," incurred by his brother Sir Robert Coke, and undischarged at his death. Henry pays £278 8s. 10d. to the creditor, and asks his brother John, now the owner of the "Grand Estate" of the family, to pay the balance—" which if it please you to pay, you shall free your faithful Brother Henry Coke." The second letter informs his father's executors that—

> " My Niece Brigget Coke (orphan daughter of Clement) not many daies before she died, called me into her chamber and entreated me to deliver a message from her to the right honble. the lord Keeper[1] and Sir Ranulfe Crewe[1] which was to the effect to entreate their Honours to be good to her brother Robert and her sister [Agnes], and because that Mrs. Pepys in her long sickness shewed herself rather as a mother to her than a stranger, she did humbly entreate youre Honors to give as a gift from her to Eliza: and Jane the daughters of Mrs. Pepys, each of them £100 a peice, and to Mrs. Pepys and her 2 daughters each of them ten pounds a piece to buy them mourninge gownes; and this I shall be ready to testify Henry Coke."

This was in 1635, and as " Niece Brigget " was buried in the Temple Church, it looks as if Uncle Henry was in London at that time, perhaps practising as a barrister. There is little doubt that the executors would do what the dying Bridget desired for the Pepysian ladies, for they certainly gave portions out of the Chief Justice's estate to Robert, Bridget, and Agnes, Mr. Pepys assuring them that " My Lord had a special Care of these children, for that they had neither father nor mother, nor any means for their maintenance other than as he should provide." Henry's interest in his poor relations shows a kind heart; as does his niece's grateful feeling for Mrs. Pepys and her daughters. Mrs. Pepys was Anne Walpole, of Houghton, a collateral in the family of the great Sir Robert and the amusing Horace, and of a Colonel Walpole who, as will be seen, allied himself by marriage with the Cokes. Of her husband something has been seen on pages 91, 92. Eliza and Jane must have been young girls at this time. Very interesting ladies they are; for though Eliza, Mrs. Dyke, does not often appear in the pages of her famous cousin's Diary, Jane is none other than " my cosen Turner " who was so very intimate with the great Samuel. Her husband, John Turner, a serjeant-at-law, was of good birth, one of the Turners of Kirkleatham in Yorkshire. It was at Mrs. Turner's house that Samuel had been " cut for the stone," and references to their friendship abound in the Diary. Eliza and Jane were only fifth cousins of Samuel, but the world being much smaller then, people had not so vast a circle of acquaintance that they could afford to neglect any of "the blood," however distant the connection might be.

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[1] Trustees and executors of the Chief Justice.

Like his brothers, Henry Coke was a Member of the House of Commons, sitting for Chipping Wycomb in 1623 and 1625, and for Dunwich in 1640.

Judging from the miniature now at Holkham, Henry had a jovial countenance, and there is evidence that he loved good eating and drinking, unlike his father in this respect, for, though the Chief Justice kept a plentiful table, he was, as Fuller has recorded, an abstemious man. In his paper of "Maxims of Conduct," he had recommended his children to "Beware of excess in eating and drinking, and use Diet under your appetite," adding that "Diet is above Physick, for many men are cur'd by Diet without Physick, but no man by Physick, without Diet."

But Henry forgot, or ignored, this prudent counsel. To his credit, however, we must remember that Henry was the only son for whose "enormous" debts his father had not to impoverish himself. Upon the whole, then, I think he may be given an excellent character—I would rather have known him and his sister Anne than pious Sir Robert, sour John, or fiery Clement. He was certainly a well-educated man, for he possessed Aristotle (in Latin), in which he has written:

> "Henrie Cooke owneth this booke.
> Witness John Coke, William Ward."

He and his wife had nine children. The Thorington registers give the baptisms of six and the burial of six, but the two eldest, Edward and Richard, are not found at Thorington.

We know from the Chief Justice's notes in that most curious specimen of the "family bible," his commentary on Littleton (now in the British Museum, Harl. 6687A), that Henry had a son Edward who was born at Stoke in 1620. Sir Edward says that he was Henry's firstborn, and adds a blessing "Benedicat ei Dominus." The old man's prayer was probably granted in the early death of little Edward, for nothing more is heard of him.

It is unfortunate that neither the birth nor burial of Richard, the eldest surviving son from whom the present

Cokes descend, can be traced. I think he may have been buried at Thorington, as his mother was, though her name is not in the register.

A possible explanation of these omissions is this: The parishes of Thorington and Bramfield adjoined each other, and were held by the same parson. The names may have been entered in the Bramfield register, and that has disappeared. Other memorials, apparently more durable than register books, have vanished. For Davy, writing in 1806, tells us that in Thorington Church "There was a monument to Jane Lovelace and to Henry and Margaret Coke—now disappeared." Some vile churchwardens' "restoration" of the eighteenth century, I suppose. Henry Coke's house, Thorington Hall, was destroyed after the property had been sold by one of the later Cokes. It is said to have been a very fine old building.

Henry Coke's son Roger is the only member of the family who seems to have possessed any literary talents. He was a voluminous writer, and certain facts of his history may be read in the "Dictionary of National Biography." In his book the "Detection of the Court and State of England" he has a good deal to say about his father, and although Mr. Gardiner says he was "mendacious and inaccurate," it is likely enough that he would tell the truth about his father.

It is from Roger that we learn how the pleasant country life at Thorington was interrupted, and how Henry, like his brother Robert, paid the penalty of his loyalty to the King. But there was a wide difference between the brothers. Robert was ready "humbly to submit to the Parliament and to sue for a relief from imprisonment and sequestration." Henry was, like his father, a true "chip of the old block," as Peter Heylyn said of his brother Clement, and "stood up" to his persecutors as the old Chief Justice had stood up to King James.

> "My Father was a Member of Parliament, and one of the First Rate which was expelled the House, sequestered and imprisoned for Malignancy first at Yarmouth, after at London. And whilst he was Prisoner there, the Committee at Haberdasher's Hall sent a messenger to him, to pay £300 for the five and twentieth part of his Estate, for being resident in London. My Father was not forward to return an Answer, till the Messenger told him he must have an Answer. Then my Father told him that such Residence as he had in London, he wished to those that sent him.

"Afterwards, Sir Anthony Weldon, Chairman to the Committee in Kent, sent to him, that if he would send the Committee his Court Rolls, they would keep his Courts for him: to which my Father answered, 'The Parliament had kept him Prisoner near three years to prove him a Knave, but Sir Anthony should not beg him for a fool.'

"My Father would never own the Parliaments Power by petitioning them, or paying any taxes assessed by them, yet, by the solicitation of my Mother, he was discharged of his Sequestration and imprisonment."

It must be hoped that after this experience of the fate meted to Malignants, Henry was allowed to live in comparative peace at Thorington. But if he was, the peace was rudely disturbed in 1656, when he had to go through a very disagreeable experience.

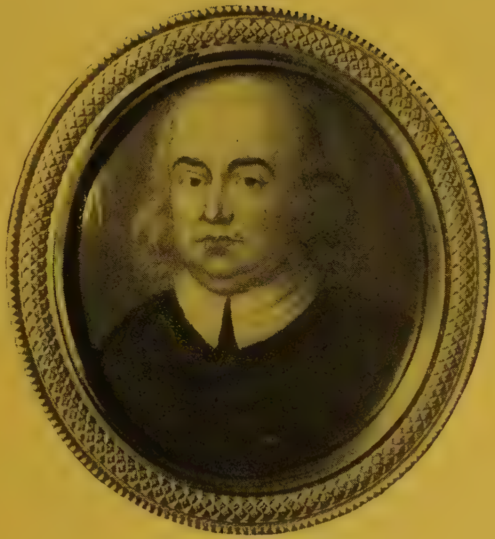
In 1656, Roger was concerned in a plot to restore Charles II., and bought a supply of arms which, with the help of his brother Robert, he concealed in the house at Thorington. Two days afterward, a party of horsemen broke into the house, failed to find the arms, but carried off Henry Coke, "who was old, very fat and unwieldy," and young Robert to the jail at Yarmouth. Roger feared that his brother would discover the plot to the soldiers and that he himself would be taken and hanged. But although Robert did confess—"it seems they had put burning matches between his fingers to make him to do it"—Roger was left unmolested, and went to the Governor of Yarmouth and complained that whatever might be the charge against Robert, it was scandalous to "invade the house of an aged, unwieldy man at midnight, and hurry him off to prison." The Governor replied that if Henry Coke would give security for his good behaviour to the Protector, all would be well, but added, "I would not have taken the language your father gave the Protector from anybody else." So Roger asked his father what he had said to the Governor which gave such offence: "He said he knew nothing, unless it were that the Governor asked him if he knew the Protector, and he answered Yes, and his Father too, when he kept his Brew-house at Huntingdon!"

"Next day the Soldiers carried my Brother for London: I went part of the way with him, and when I could get an opportunity, instructed him what to do, and about three Days after, my Father returned to his house in Sir Nicholas Bacon's Coach: for after my Brother was gone, the Governor ordered my Father to be released; who, to get out of the Town, not staying to send for his own Coach or Horses, took one of the Carts (peculiar to the Town of Yarmouth), which have two wheels behind, and over them a place to carry Goods from Shipboard to the Merchants' Warehouses, and in it went to Sir Nicholas Bacon's. Its strange how such an odd thing should be remembered: for about twenty years after, I being at the South End of Yarmouth, and my Horse standing at the North, (about three quarters of a Mile) and seeing one of these Carts, I asked the Owner if he would carry me to my Inn, and I would give him Sixpence: we agreed, and the Fellow told me how before he carried my L— to Sir Nicholas Bacon's in it."

Roger Coke then describes how he fails to arrange matters satisfactorily for his father at Bury St. Edmunds, whither he is summoned to give security for good behaviour—security which the stout-hearted old gentleman, though unwieldy, refuses to give. Roger decides to go to London and see Cromwell. He hopes for the countenance of Major-General Skippon, whose father had been servant to the Chief Justice, and Sir Robert Coke. But "when I named my Father, the General walked out of the room." Mr. Nathaniel Bacon, however, took him in to the Chamber of Audience.

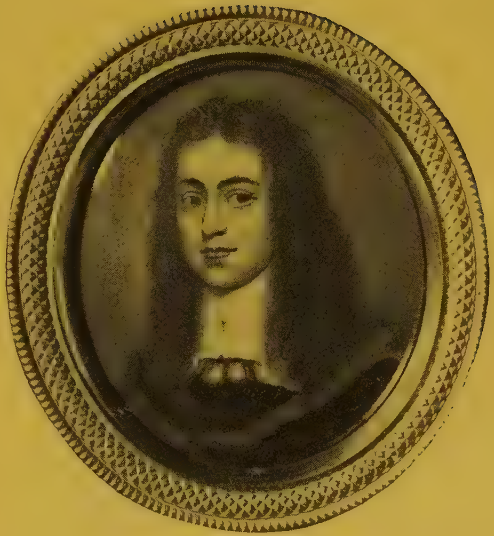
"So I appeared before Cromwel (which was the only time I ever saw him) in Henry the Eight's Chamber in Whitehall: but Mr. Bacon stood at the further Door, and Cromwel and I at the Door next the Closet: Cromwel seem'd to read the Petition, tho' to my Apprehension he read not one line of it, but sometimes look'd upon me, then upon the Paper; and after some Pause told me, Mr. Bacon should give me a satisfactory Answer: then Cromwel told me 'He knew my Father very well, and that I had a very fair Sister'; and I believe would have gone on at this rate, when I humbly thanked his Highness for his Favour to my Father, and so went off. My Father was not further prosecuted for Security, which was all I cared for; and I believe my Father was the only Man who was Sequestred in England, who escaped it without Imprisonment. My Brother proved stanch, and would not make any further discovery, tho' Cromwel proffered to prefer him in the Army, and at last, by my own proper charges, I got him released."

What a splendid old fellow, this Henry Coke! No respecter of persons, least of all afraid of Cromwell, living a free life like a Cavalier, bluff, hearty, unconquerable. With what profound pleasure he must have witnessed the downfall of the Protectorate and the return of Charles II. But he did not live long after the King came to enjoy his own again, for death claimed him in the autumn of the succeeding year. I hope



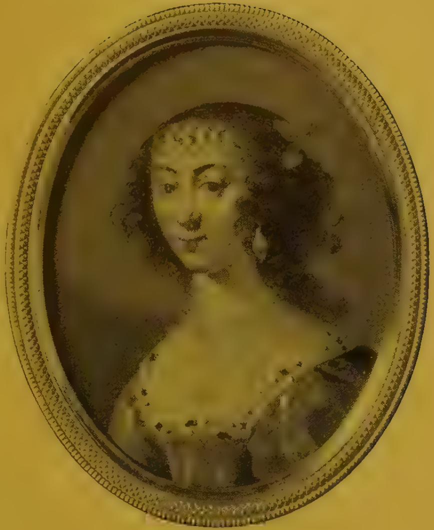
HENRY COKE (1591-1661).

From a miniature at Holkham.



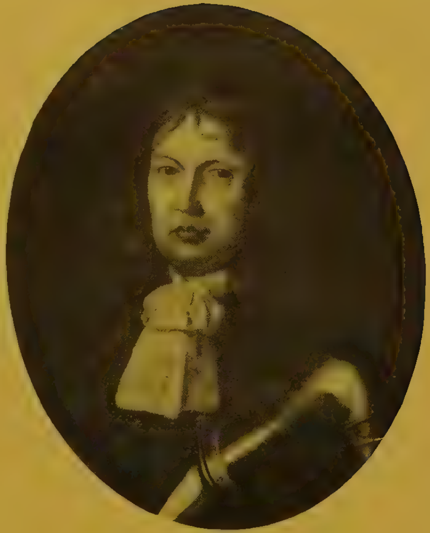
A SON OF HENRY COKE (? ROGER).

From a miniature at Holkham.



MARY, DAUGHTER OF SIR JOHN ROUS,
WIFE OF RICHARD COKE.

From a miniature at Holkham.



RICHARD COKE, SON TO HENRY COKE
(1626-1669).

From a portrait at Holkham.

his sister Anne heard of his resolute conduct and his sufferings, and altered her opinion about the glory departing from the family with Robert. But it may be that these two stout spirits never got on well with each other. Anne makes no mention of Henry in any of the papers she left behind her.

In Thurloe's "State Papers" (vol. iv., p. 42) an account is given of young Robert Coke's examination, and he did indeed prove staunch. The examination was held on April 2, 1658, before Colonel John Biscoe and others, and they declared that Robert Coke "Saith he knoweth not of any insurrection to be intended in England, neither did ever he hear of any foreign army under the Command of a Frenchman to be landed on these Coasts, and he denieth all his whole charge, and further saith not."

Robert died a month after his father. Roger says they were not good friends. Let us hope they became so before their end.

* * * * *

Of Richard, so important a member of the Coke family, the elder of the sons of Henry Coke and Margaret Lovelace, scarcely any record has survived. But as he begot a son who was grandfather of that Thomas Coke who made Holkham as we see it now, and was created Earl of Leicester, his value to the family pedigree cannot be overrated.

Born in 1626, he was a Fellow Commoner of King's College, Cambridge, and like his uncle Clement and his father, represented Dunwich in Parliament. He married, in 1646, a lady of a fine old Suffolk family—Mary, daughter of Sir John Rous of Henham, and Mary's mother was one of the ancient Knyvets of Ashwellthorpe. Where Richard lived and died, I do not know. He is described as "of Thorington," so it may be that he and his wife kept house, in patriarchal fashion, with old Henry and Mrs. Margaret, and once he is described as of Knatishall, but no trace remains of him there. Fortunately his portrait has been preserved, and it suggests a serious, well-looking man, with the long straight nose of his grandfather. Mr. Carthew gives 1661 as the date of Richard Coke's death, but in Hardware's MS. notes at the Bodleian, the date is said to have been 1669, and this is probably right.

* * * * *

His brother Roger wrote various books besides his "Detection," but does not seem to have prospered. The editor of the third edition of the "Detection" says he was supported by his nephews who owned the "Grand Estate," and lived within the Rules of the Fleet. Le Neve says he was buried in St. Bridget's Church, London. He was married, though the "Dictionary of National Biography" says he was not. A daughter, Mary, was baptised at Mileham, where the Chief Justice was born; and in a pedigree now at Holkham, drawn up in 1674, "two sons now living" are mentioned. I think one of these was a certain John Coke who became one of the guardians of Thomas Coke, first Earl of Leicester, and that the other may have been Robert Coke who was presented to the rich living of Bishop's Cleeve by his cousin Edward, in 1695. Both must have died without issue.

* * * * *

His younger brother Ciriac married Katharine Gooding, of Wherstead, and had four sons. The pedigree of 1674 says that two of these, Henry and John, were dead, and Mr. Davey says that a third, Roger, died an infant. The other children were Ciriac and Mary. I do not know what became of them. Ciriac the father must have been a thriftless, unprofitable Coke. He wandered from place to place, constantly being succoured by his elder brother Richard. He was buried at Thorington.

CHAPTER XVII

CLEMENT COKE AND HIS CHILDREN

(Born at Huntingfield, September 19, 1594; died May 23, 1629; buried in the Temple Church. Married Sarah Rediche, of Rediche, near Manchester. She died 1633.)

IT seemed best, on the whole, to sketch the lives of John and Henry Coke's children in connection with their parents. Perhaps it has been forgotten that there still remains another of the Chief Justice's children to account for—Clement, who was the baby for whom beer and cakes were bought on the journey from London to Godwick in 1597. He was the youngest surviving son of the Chief Justice, for Thomas, the last of Bridget Paston's children, died at birth. Educated at Westminster School, Clement went to Cambridge as Fellow Commoner of Trinity College, Michaelmas, 1608, and was granted special admission, together with his elder brothers, John and Henry, at the Inner Temple, February, 1609-10.

He seems to have been a turbulent person from his youth, and had a fine spirit of his own—the kind of spirit which cautious people dislike, and which was certainly not in accordance with his father's motto, "Prudens qui patiens." Again, it is well to remember that he, like his brothers, had no wise mother to bring him up well. Probably he was put out to nurse and left to hirelings; if he ever lived with his father and stepmother, he was early a witness of such scenes of temper and pride, self-will and discord, as are no good example for the young.

Only a few months after his admittance to the Temple, he had to be "put out of Commons" for some misdemeanour, and when his readmittance was to be considered by the Parliament of the Inn, "it was respited because he had not attended the Bench as ordered." A difficult young man to manage, no doubt. Such conduct must surely have displeased his father, but, nevertheless, that indulgent parent dowered him with the fine property of Longford in Derbyshire, bought in 1616 from the trustees of the last male owner, Nicholas Longford, for £5,000, and married him to the customary heiress, Sarah Rediche, daughter and heir of Alexander Rediche (or Redyshe) of Rediche in Lancashire. This was very proper, for Sarah was great-niece and natural heir to Nicholas Longford. As his father-in-law survived him four years, Clement never had the full enjoyment of his wife's property, but the marriage was highly prudent. The Rediches were ancient and honourable, and owned 400 acres of land, with a pleasant black-and-white timber mansion, between Manchester and Stockport. All this valuable property continued in the Coke family (though not always in possession of the heir-male of the "Grand Estate" —*i.e.,* the Chief Justice's own estate) until 1808, when Thomas William Coke obtained an Act of Parliament which enabled him to sell it for £100,000.

Clement was Member of Parliament for Hedon in Clitheroe in 1614, for Dunwich in 1620, and for Aylesbury in 1625, until his death.

He was no silent Member of the House, and one of his speeches has its place in history—that in which he said: "It is better to die by a foreign enemy, than to be destroyed at home." We remember that his sister Mrs. Sadleir had something to say to Peter Heylyn in connection with this speech. We are told that "the words were construed by one Dr. Tanner, a brother M.P., as meant to apply to the Duke of Buckingham."

Clement was delated to the King, but when King Charles heard of it, he said: "Mr. Coke told you it was better to die by a foreign enemy, than to be destroyed at home. Indeed, I think it more honourable for a King to be invaded and almost destroyed by a foreign enemy, than to be despised at home."

Then there is a note by Camden in his "Annals" for 1621, May 5: "Clement Coke eldest son to the outed Lord Chief Justice Edw: Coke is committed to the Tower for his insolent affronting of Morison." It is odd that Camden, who had made out the elaborate pedigrees for the Chief Justice, should have called Clement the eldest instead of the youngest son. I have not traced the history of this squabble.

There were more dangerous quarrels in his career. A short detention in the Tower was not a very serious punishment. But James I., placable man, was violently opposed to duelling, and the Chief Justice owned a copy of the royal tract against that bloody practice. Yet Clement was a duellist, and had killed his man. This was one Mr. Liggon, and the duel was fought in Holland. It may be that he fought two duels, for Secretary Winwood, writing to Sir Dudley Carleton, Ambassador at the Hague, begs His Excellency's protection for Clement "on the occasion of the double misfortune which has happened to him, to see that no dishonour fall upon him, and if there be cause, to procure his pardon." Sir Dudley replies that Mr. Clement is recovered of his hurt; that as for Mr. Liggon "with whom he fought at Gorcum," he died "rather by the fault of his surgeons, than by the danger of his hurt"; and that he is taking steps to have Mr. Coke returned to England under the safe escort of one Captain Sprey, "whereby he may be delivered from the many quarrels wherein he is engaged."

But if he lived a stormy life, his epitaph suggests that he reformed. He died on March 23, 1629-30, and was buried the same day in the Temple Church "above the bencher's pues on the Inner Temple side." The spot must have been near the east wall of the church, for in 1642 Lady Elizabeth Young is buried "near the high altar between the door and Mr. Clement Coke's monument, close by the doore and wall at the upper end of the quire on the side aisle." The monument is no longer there. At the last "restoration" of the church it was removed with many others to the Gallery of the Round. There the words may still be read which declare that Clement "in the Inner Temple (being a Fellow of the same) Christianly and Comfortably in his Flourishing Age yielded up his Soul to the Almighty."

So the tomb closes over the Chief Justice's Benjamin. Some parents have been said to like their naughtiest children best. Perhaps Sir Edward, a patriarch of eighty when Clement died, held his dear Bridget's youngest boy in special affection. We have seen that, in spite of the lad's unruly conduct at the Temple, he gave him a fine estate; it was doubtless he who got Secretary Winwood to intercede for him about the duelling; and we know that Sir Edward "had a special care" for Clement's younger children. But how did the old gentleman like being told that Clement's debts amounted to £1,656 15s. 2d., and that if he does not pay them, no one else will?

The children of Clement and his wife Sarah (who survived him only three years) were:

1. Theophila, who died an infant.

2. Edward, born 1617, who succeeded to Longford and, at his grandfather Rediche's death, to the Lancashire property, was created a Baronet in 1641, and married Catharine, daughter and coheir of a famous Judge, Sir William Dyer, and had eight children, all of whom died without legitimate issue—namely, Edward, Katharine, Robert, Richard, Ann, another Edward, Clement, and Theophila. His eldest surviving son Robert succeeded him as second Baronet, married Miss Sarah Barker, and died in 1687, being succeeded as third Baronet by his younger brother Edward. Of this last Sir Edward of Longford much will be heard later, and it will be seen how Clement Coke's fine estates reverted eventually to the "heir-male of the Grand Estate of the family."

3. Bridget, died in the Temple, and was buried beside her father's grave, November 17, 1635 (see p. 114).

4. Agnes.

5. Robert, of Nonesuch, born 1623, died 1681, buried at Epsom.

I do not know what became of Agnes, but Robert lived to go into the Navy, and to cause a good deal of trouble and loss to the heir-male, his cousin Robert, grandson of Henry Coke. It will be remembered that John Coke the Younger wasted much of his substance on Mr. Andrew Fountaine. He alienated as much, or more, to this very Robert of Nonesuch, his cousin, whom he named executor, with a lawyer, one Guavas. Both of them seem to have been rascals. They were held to have made £24,000 out of John Coke the Younger's estate, when the various lawsuits brought against them were compromised.

This Robert married his cousin Theophila, daughter of Arthur Coke, and lived near Epsom. His monument in the church there says that he died in 1681, "having faithfully served his Majestie K. Charles I and lived to see the disappointment of his enemyes in the Restoration. . . ." He left a son who must have died without an heir before 1696, when it was settled that failing a direct heir to Edward Coke of Norfolk, the "Grand Estate" of the family should go to Sir Edward Coke of Longford, and failing him, to the "right heir of John Coke."

And now let us dismiss this Robert in favour of a much more important Robert.

CHAPTER XVIII

ROBERT COKE AND HIS WIFE

(Only son of Richard, son of Henry Coke; born 1651; married Lady Ann Osborne, daughter of the Earl of Danby, afterwards Duke of Leeds, by Lady Bridget Bertie, daughter of Lord Willoughby d'Eresby, Earl of Lindsey. Succeeded his cousin John Coke the Younger in the Grand Estate, 1671. Died January, 1678-79; buried at Tittleshall.)

FOR the due comprehension of the Coke pedigree it is well that the reader should become intimate with this genial Robert, so intimate that he can say without effort who he was, whence he came, and who came after him. Let it be remembered, then, that the Chief Justice's three elder sons failed to produce heirs-male. Edward died young; Sir Robert succeeded to the estates, but had no children; Arthur died young, leaving only daughters; so that when Sir Robert died, the fourth son, John of Holkham, the Elder, came in to the "Grand Estate." Of all his many children, only the fifteenth, John the Younger, survived to succeed, and he died unmarried. Who, then, was the heir? Why, Henry Coke, fifth son of the Chief Justice. But he was dead, and so was his eldest son, Richard. Richard, however, had a son, an only son, a precious son; his name was Robert, and he succeeded, a young man of twenty, to the property (Longford excepted, which was Clement Coke's portion) amassed by the Chief Justice, diminished though it had been by his second marriage, and by the prodigality and folly of several members of his posterity.

Robert Coke was probably brought up at Thorington. He went to Queens' College, Cambridge, like his Grandfather, Henry Coke, and took the degree of M.A. (Lit. Reg.) in 1673. In that year, also, he became Member of Parliament for King's Lynn, not without an expenditure worthy of his great-great-grandson, Thomas William Coke (first Earl of Leicester of the second creation), who represented Norfolk for so many years, and spent incredible sums, it is said, on his own elections and those of brother Whigs. That Mr. Coke was so widely known in his own, and in the present day, as "Mr. Coke of Norfolk," that it is right to lay stress upon the fact that this territorial title was not awarded him as a special and singular honour. His ancestors were commonly designated "Coke of Norfolk" a hundred years before he was born—John Coke is thus referred to, and Roger North, the barrister-biographer, speaks of Robert as "Mr. Coke of Norfolk," in his "Lives of the Norths." He tells how, when Francis North was made Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in 1673, Mr. Coke of Norfolk succeeded him in the Burgess-ship of Lynn, "but not so easy and cheap, for his managers did not keep in due bounds, but let loose the tap, all over that large town, and made an account of £7000 or more resting due to the town, besides what had been paid for expenses."

Here was a pretty penny for the young gentleman to pay out of estates impoverished by Cousin John and his Fountaine, and by rascally Cousin Robert, the Captain, and Lawyer Guavas.

And still more money had to be spent before Robert might take his seat. "Sir Simon Taylor opposed, and thought he had the return, and being resolved to petition, was courted by the Earl of Danby, at the price of all his charges, which were not trifles, to forbear, else his Lordship's son-in-law Coke had, at that juncture, been turned out."

For Robert had married Lady Ann Osborne, a daughter of the famous Danby, the Lord Treasurer, whose history every schoolboy knows—Danby who became Duke of Leeds as a reward for his clever statesmanship. His reputation as an "old parliamentary hand" survived in popular song until the nineteenth century. Lady Ernestine Edgcumbe remembered an old song heard in her childhood:

"Zounds! what meant the Parliament?
Sure they were drunk with Brandy,
When they thought to circumvent
Thomas Earl of Danby."

To meet his son-in-law's expenses at Lynn, Lord Danby provided ready money to the tune of £5,000, and this turned out a very costly loan. The interest was 6 per cent., and the debt was not paid off till 1708, so that from first to last that election for Lynn cost the Coke Estate something like £20,000: what would the purchasing power of that sum be today?

Who arranged the alliance between Mr. Coke of Norfolk and Lady Ann Osborne? No doubt it was her father, for Robert, poor soul, had no fond and prudent parents alive to look out a wife for him.

It is a striking testimony to the important place held in public estimation by the owner of the Coke Estates in the reign of Charles II. that the ambitious Danby should have chosen Mr. Coke of Norfolk for a son-in-law. Determined to rise higher and higher, he would naturally seek all the advantages that matrimonial alliances could bring. He married one daughter to a natural son of the King, the Earl of Plymouth; another to a Herbert of the great House of Wilton, another to Lord O'Brien, a fourth to the Earl of Bath. But for his eldest daughter he chose Mr. Coke, who, though a Commoner, had landed property in ten counties and must have enjoyed great political influence. Robert Coke settled on Lady Ann as her jointure estates which brought in nearly £1,500 a year. Robert was High Sheriff of Norfolk in 1676. Lord Yarmouth (he was Sir Robert Paston, of Oxnead, created a Baron in 1673, and an Earl in 1679) wrote to his Lady, from Thetford: "I hear my cozen Coke will be very splendid all the Assizes, with his new liveries, and be very fine."

Cousin Coke had but a short life—let us hope it was one of happiness—with his august bride, though her grandson Thomas hinted that it was not altogether a successful match. At any rate, she gave him a son, an heir-male, and succeeded in keeping the child alive—no slight task in those days of agues, and smallpox, and croup, and a hundred deadly infantile maladies. Robert had perpetual worry over all the lawsuits about his cousin John's Will, and the robberies committed by his cousin Captain Robert Coke and Guavas. But perhaps he left these to be dealt with by his men of business. His father-in-law, the Duke of Leeds, certainly took much trouble about these sordid concerns. Robert was a cheerful soul, and led a merry life: he loved sport and good living. There is at Holkham a copious collection of his tradesmen's bills, and his travelling accounts. These are interesting as throwing light on his manner of life, and the prices he had to pay in the reign of Charles II. One is a bill for furniture for his hawks:

5 flying hoods	7	6d.
6 paire of bells	8	od.
2 Hobby's hoods	1	6d.
2 paire of bells for Hobbys	1	od.
2 baggs for Hobbys	7	od.
6 pairs of Jesses	2	od.
3 lewers [lures]	15	od.
3 Rafter hoods	1	6d.
Trimming for tassel gentle	3	6d.
A paire of Craines	1	6d.
Coping the Hawkes	7	6d.
7 paire of Varnills	10	od.

etc., etc.

That Robert hunted the fox is clear, for money has to be paid for "stopping earths." And he practised archery:

Two silk strings to the Greate Bowe	9	0
4 smaller silk strings	12	0
6 small arrowes	6	0
Cleaning the Bowe	2	6
For tene boults	6	0
For a Case to the Great Bowe	4	0
A Quiver	2	6
5 Arrowes to the Greate Bowe	6	8
1 lb. ½ of bullets	0	8

He paid his bills honourably, though sometimes he had to be "dunned." In 1776 his haberdasher, Mr. Cuddon, has to beg earnestly for £51 13s. 3d. due for "very fine holland at 14/- an elle, fine cambrick at 48/- the piece," with other cheaper sorts. "It will be a very great kindness to mee if you would please to grant my request, because I am in great want of money to pay my last year's debts, by reason of the bad payment I meet with from others."

Unlike Dr. Johnson, Robert Coke evidently loved clean linen, and was nice in his shirts, and that not only for himself. There are large bills for shirts and ruffles for "the Page and the Four Footmen." Silk stockings were, of course, a necessity. "Knitt-silk" came to thirty shillings for two pairs; "woven" were cheaper, only ten shillings a pair.

Robert Coke elected to live chiefly at Holkham rather than at Godwick or Huntingfield or Thorington. Holkham has to this day one of the best fruit and vegetable gardens in England. But Mr. Coke's gardener at Holkham grew all the vegetables, except seakale, that are grown there now, and some others which are grown no longer, such as "Black Radishes, Skerrett, Black Scorzonera, Salsafy, Corn Salad, and Colewort." Colewort was known in Scotland, as we know, because Catharine Seyton and Roland Graeme had nothing to eat but "a mess of Coleworts" at St. Bridget's Convent, as Sir Walter has told us in "The Abbot." Three sorts of cucumber were sown—long, short, and prickly. The list of herbs is long and interesting. "Sweet Mandoline" is a pretty name; Gerard says of it "Balsamita fœmina, sive Ageratum, the flowers are of a beautiful and seemly show, cherished for their sweet floures and leaves." "White and Green Rouncivalls"—what were these? Gerard says, "The Great Pease called in Latin Pisum Romanum, in English, Roman Pease, or Rouncivalls." But Mr. Coke grew other kinds of pease, such as "Long and Short Hotspurs." He pays sixpence for a "Sensible Plant," which, I suppose, is gardener's English for "Sensitive plant." Perhaps Lady Ann was indifferent to the charms of a flower-garden; perhaps flowers were unfashionable among Cavaliers, since Roundheads, such as Milton and Andrew Marvell, had shown such love and knowledge of them in their poems. Anyhow, the only flowers mentioned in the gardener's bills are "Amarantus purpureus, coccineus, and tricolor" (our "love-lies-bleeding"), and "Everlasting Pease." Love-apples (tomatoes) and thorn-apples were grown for ornament.

Robert and Lady Ann loved fruit and spared no expense at the fruiterer's shop. "Duke Cherries," early in May, must have been grown under glass, and they cost ten shillings a pound; a "Baskitt of White Harts and Dukes" costs twenty-four shillings. In June they were less than half that price. But Lady Ann had a special love for cherries just at this time. Her husband wrote to Lord Yarmouth on May 13, 1676: "My wife hath received y^{r} Lordship's present and it came so seasonably that I believe y^{r} Lordship hath prevented her longing, w^{ch} no place in Norfolk could have done so soone, but y^{r} Lordship's gardens, where there is so great variety and plenty.

. . . Shee hath allready fallen upon y^{e} Cherryes, and intends for y^{r} pease as soon as they can be drest. . . ."

The forcing-houses at Oxnead must have been as productive then as those of Holkham are now. Lady Ann's "longing" may be explained by the fact that her son Edward was "on his way." "Rasps" and "Red and White Strawberries" were not so dear as cherries, but we must not think of them as being anything like our modern gigantic berries. Strawberries until a hundred years ago were scarcely larger than a fine alpine or hautbois. "Apricocks" are ten shillings the dozen —very costly. But perhaps they were genuine "Moor Parks" from some scion of Sir William Temple's original tree. Lord Danby had once wished to marry his cousin, the celebrated Dorothy Osborne, who became Sir William Temple's wife. She scorned him, but they may have made it up. "Moor Park" is still the best apricot, as Dr. Grant knew, and we know, from Jane Austen's account of the argument over Mrs. Norris' tree, "a present from Sir Thomas Bertram, and it was bought as a Moorpark," at Mansfield Parsonage.

Thanks to the first Lord Leicester, there is still a convenient post-office in the house at Holkham, but we may be sure there was none in the old manor house where Robert and Lady Ann Coke lived. The servant whose duty it was to look after the sending of letters renders his bill from time to time. Fifty letters cost £1 9s. 6d.; a "single" letter went for three or four pence, a "double" letter for sixpence. Urgent messages were sent by the running footman, Arthur Mathew, who was paid more when he ran with the coach, than when alone, and could run as he liked. (Coaches did not go fast.)

Two days Running with the Coach to Godwick, and two days back again	10	0
Going to Godwick alone	2	6
Running to Norwich	2	6
Norwich to Thorington	2	6
One daies borde wages	1	0
2 days up to London	5	0
3 days running back	7	6
2 payre of pumps	5	0

He must have been a good runner if he got to London in two days from Holkham. But it may have been only from

Thorington. I hope the mention of Godwick and Thorington implies that Robert Coke sometimes inhabited the houses of his grandfather Henry, and his great-grandfather, Sir Edward Coke.

When Robert and Lady Ann travelled in their coach-and-six they were attended by several servants and three outriders:

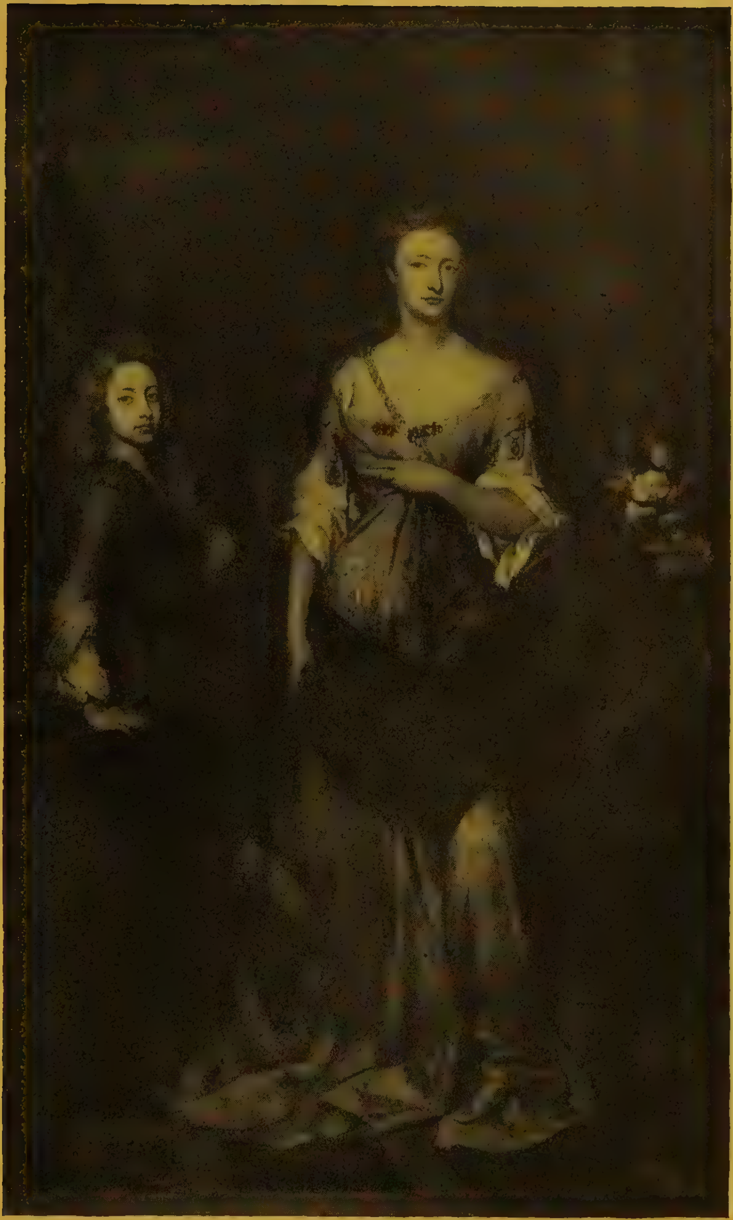
Hay for 6 coach horses for 5 nights ...	£1	5	0
8 bushells of Oats	1	0	0
8 peckes of beanes		8	0
Beane for the horses		2	0

The coach-horses were foreigners. One James White "humbly craves an allowance for 12 weeks looking after 2 Coach mares on board the ship 'Alexander,' from Hambro', in which time he was in great trouble and hardship, . . also 9 months attendance on them when at home." He got £5 for this twelvemonth's job. Even allowing for the difference in the value of money, the recompense does not seem unduly large. Macaulay says: "The coaches of the aristocracy were drawn by Grey Flemish mares which endured better than any Cattle reared in our island the work of dragging a ponderous equipage over the rugged pavement of London."

The route taken from Holkham to London was by Swaffham, Barton Mills, Littlebury, Cambridge, Bishops Stortford, and Hoddesdon. The bills for dinner at these places are numerous and entertaining. It seems difficult to account for the enormous quantity of food charged for, unless Mr. Coke and Lady Ann had appetites beyond the common standard, or did they bring "company" with them in the coach? Perhaps the servants ordered extra food and wine, as did the valets in "Gil Blas"—"ten bottles of your best wine, Landlord; and, according to custom, add them to my Master's bill."

Take, for example, their dinner bill one night at Bishops Stortford. It came to £11 1s. 10d., but the rascal of a landlord, in collusion, I suppose, with Mr. Coke's steward, made it into £13 17s., which was paid:

Bread and beare	£2	0	0
Wine	4	6	8
A pottage		6	0
2 Shoulders of Mutton		6	0
Loyn of Mutton		2	6



LADY ANN OSBORNE (D. 1722), WIFE TO ROBERT COKE, AND HER SON EDWARD (1677-1707).

From a portrait by Dahl at Holkham.

Legg of Mutton	6	6
Salletts	1	0
Ghirkins	6	0
2 Ducks	3	6
3 Rabetts	5	8
3 doz. larkes	8	0
Snipes	1	6
Tartes and Cream	6	0
Crayfish and Srimps	6	0
Fire	6	0
Sugar and Cinnemon	4	0
Servants	4	0

At Cambridge, one September day, there was set before them a very expensive dish of "pike, pearch, tench, and eels," which cost £2 5s. 6d., and those who did not like it had choice of a dish of "souls," and pickled oysters. This was a gay dinner, for there was "Musick," and the musicians received a pound. "Aqua mirabilis" sounds very splendid, one is surprised at its cheapness—only one shilling. But what had "London Treacle" (at 2s. 5d.) to do in this most genteel bill of fare?

At Barton Mills, one evening, they washed down their dinner with twenty-two bottles of French wine, and fourteen bottles of sack, one pint of "burnt" claret—we call it "mulled"—and one and a half quarts of "mild Sack." That seems a generous allowance even for a coach-full, and it does not look as if it had been full on this occasion, or else some of the company ate and drank so much that they had little appetite for breakfast next morning. The breakfast bill of fare is quite moderate, only two dishes of steaks, three bottles of sack, one of white wine, "burnt clarett," sugar and nutmeg, brandy, "beare" and bread, butter and cheese, and the price, one pound. Surely the innkeepers raised their prices for Mr. Coke of Norfolk and my Lord Treasurer's daughter.

An uncomfortable suspicion arises that Robert Coke ate and drank too much. It may have had something to do with the jovial young man's early death. When he was not living in one of his own houses he often stayed at Wimbledon, where his father-in-law had a house. He died on January 16, 1678-79, having done his duty to the family by recovering some of its wealth, and still more by becoming the father of a son, an only son, Edward, who lived to succeed him.

Lady Ann buried him, very properly, in the place chosen by his great-grandfather as the family dormitory—the church of Tittleshall. There she raised a marble monument to him "as a mark of her entire love and affection to the memory of her dear husband." She dried her tears, settled down to the enjoyment of her "joynture" of £1,488 a year, and then she married again.

CHAPTER XIX

EDWARD AND CARY COKE

(Edward Coke, son of Robert Coke and Lady Ann Osborne: born 1676; married May 4, 1696; died at St. James's Square, April 13, 1707.

Cary, daughter of Sir John Newton, third Baronet of Barr's Court, Gloucestershire, and Culverthorpe, Lincolnshire, and Abigail, only daughter of William Heveningham and Lady Mary Cary, daughter of second Earl of Dover: born June 9, 1680; died at Earl's Court, August 4, 1707.)

TO Robert and Lady Ann Coke three children were born: Edward, who survived; a second son born in 1678; and a daughter, Elizabeth. Knowledge of these obscurer children is due to Mr. William Montagu, who, writing to Lord Montagu in March, 1678, says: "My Lady Danby is in great sorrow for the death of her Grandchild, my cousin Coke's daughter"; and again, in November of the same year: "My Lady Anne Coke is brought to bed of a son, but somewhat before her time, and a very weakly one" (Montagu House Papers, vol. i., pp. 328-9).

The little boy probably died at once; his name is not entered on any of the pedigrees. The daughter is so entered, but her name is wrongly given as Anne. It is well that Mr. Montagu chronicled Lady Danby's grief for her grandchild, for, as Duchess of Leeds, she had an unenviable reputation for want of heart, and her portrait by Kneller is that of a hard, stern woman.

Of Edward Coke's early years little is certainly known. He may have been brought up at Holkham, but was often at his grandfather Danby's house at Wimbledon, for Lady Ann spent much of her time there. He seems to have been well-educated as far as book-learning goes, but not wisely in regard to character and self-discipline. Judging from her letters, Lady Ann was a foolish woman, and her marriage (in March, 1691, according to Narcissus Luttrell) with Colonel Horatio Walpole, uncle to the great Sir Robert, was a fatal step. The Colonel was a "fine gentleman," very likely, but on his own testimony he was a desperately hard drinker, and on that of others, a mean, shifty fellow, who gave a vast deal of trouble to his step-relations. Cousin Sir Edward Coke, of Longford, had to warn Sir John Newton, Edward's father-in-law, to be on his guard against Colonel Walpole, and to "hold suspect any dealings with him." His influence, then, cannot have been a good one.

There exist letters of Colonel Walpole which bear out the story that he was this sort of person. He and Lady Ann lived at Beck Hall, a fine old house which the Chief Justice had bought, some twenty miles from Holkham. He was constantly trying to get the better of his step-son and landlord, Edward Coke, and succeeded in doing so, especially when Edward "was merry in drink," as we are told by a letter from the family lawyer. He lived to annoy his relations till 1717, dying when he was fifty-four. Lady Ann, who was at least six or seven years older than her husband, survived till 1722, when she was about sixty-six.

Edward Coke, then, as a youth, had neither a good example nor a firm hand to guide him. Perhaps his grandfather Danby, or the stern, frigid grandmother, gave him good advice; but it is no marvel if he grew up self-indulgent, and with the family failing unchecked of spending more than he could afford.

Early in 1696, when he was twenty, his grandfather, now Duke of Leeds, found a bride for him, and, as we might expect, a bride with a fortune. The Duke himself supervised the draft of marriage articles.

"*March* 21, 1696.

"Mr. Edw : Coke is to marry Mrs. Newton who in reall and personal estate is valued to be worth £40,000. And it is agreed that Mr. Coke shall make her a joynture of land to the value of £2,500 p. ann. To settle upon the heir male lands of the value of £6,000 per annum and for want of such heir, their trustees to raise portions for daughters.

If but one daughter	£20,000
If 2 or more daughters	£25,000

Then to Sir Edw : Coke for life in tail male, and then, In default, to ye *right heirs of John Coke,* but on attaining the age of 21, Mr. Coke may revoke this.

"In case he have issue, to make provision for daughters and younger Sons, to wit, rent charges for life to ye younger sons not exceeding

£200 to any one. And portions for daughters not exceeding £5,000. The Lady's real estate to continue as it is devised by her Grandmother."

Who was Mrs. Newton? She was a charming person, I am sure, and my greatest favourite of all in the Coke pedigree, except Anne Coke, Mrs. Sadleir.

Her father was Mr. John Newton, three years after Cary's marriage to become Sir John Newton, third Baronet, of Barr's Court in the Parish of Bitton, Somerset, and of Culverthorpe in the Parish of Haydor, Lincolnshire. But he was not a descendant of the very ancient family of Newton of Barr's Court, who represented the still more ancient Bittons of Bitton, and the story of how his family came to be owners of Barr's Court is curious.

The last of the old Newtons of Barr's Court died in 1661, without an heir. Just as Scotland wishes a Haig to be at Bemerside, so this old gentleman determined that there should still be a Newton at Barr's Court. He found a respectable gentleman of the name in Lincolnshire, Mr. Newton, of Culverthorpe, and he made him his heir. Offered a baronetcy in 1660, he secured to this heir the succession to the title, and as he died the next year, Mr. Newton of Culverthorpe awoke to find himself Sir John Newton, Baronet, with the magnificent property of Barr's Court, as well as his own estate at Culverthorpe, and a very rich man. He married an entirely delightful wife—Mary, eldest daughter of Sir Gervase Eyre, Knight, of Rampton in Nottinghamshire.

She bore him thirteen daughters and four sons, and of course the eldest was christened John. This John was the father of Cary Coke.

And who was her mother? Again let us attend, for this genealogy is highly interesting. Her mother was Miss Abigail Heveningham (pronounce it Henningham), daughter of that William Heveningham, of Ketteringham in Norfolk, who is generally spoken of as "Heveningham the Regicide," and his wife, Lady Mary Cary, daughter of the last Earl of Dover.

Blomefield says: "The Heveninghams, who had their sirname from the town of that name in Suffolk, hath been very honourably matched; and if we may credit many accounts, Jeffrey de Heveningham was lord there in King Canute's time A.D. 1020." So the Heveningham family was almost as old as that of Thackeray's Polly Muggins, who had an Ap Mogyn ancestor, "Chief of the Hundred Beeves to Queen Boadicea." One of the "honourable matches" had been with a Paston of Norfolk, so the Heveninghams and Cokes could call cousins, *à la mode d'Ecosse.*

William the Regicide certainly sat among the Judges of King Charles, but he refused to sign the death-warrant, and although he was tried and sentenced to death on the return of Charles II., his life was spared, and his estates were preserved to the family, at the powerful intercession of his wife's relations. Love, as we know, is an overmastering passion, and it surely must have mastered Lady Mary Cary, who was a thorough Loyalist, else why should she have married a "Regicide"? It is a difficult problem, for he is a sour enough looking villain in both his portraits now at Holkham. She got him released from prison, and took him home to Ketteringham, where he lived till 1678, when she buried him, and, in her lifetime, erected a splendid tomb "for herself, her deceased husband, and her children." Blomefield descended into the vault where they are buried, and says: "The coffin of the traitour and his bones are now wholly broken to pieces, which seems to have been done designedly, for his head or scull is laid upon his wife's coffin which is very entire." The rhyming epitaph on the big tomb is curious, and shows that Lady Mary, if she were its author, had no mean opinion of herself:

"Under this Pyramid of marble lies
Both root and branch of noble Progenies,
His matchless Lady him secured, brought home,
In peace deceased, lies umbraged in this Tomb,
Where, undisturbed, may their slumbering Dust
Rest till the Resurrection of the Just."

Lady Mary commemorated the Restoration of King Charles II. by planting a walnut-tree near Ketteringham Hall, which venerable witness to her loyalty survived till quite recent days. Maternally she descended from a race of fairly remarkable people—the Careys, who were created Barons with the title of Hunsdon, and later, Earls of Dover. It will be remembered that Queen Elizabeth gave Huntingfield, where the Chief Justice and his Bridget lived, and which the Chief Justice eventually bought, to her cousin, Lord Hunsdon, whose

EDWARD COKE (1677-1707), FATHER TO THOMAS,
FIRST EARL OF LEICESTER.

From a portrait at Holkham.

CARY NEWTON, WIFE TO EDWARD COKE (1680-1707).

From a portrait at Holkham.

mother was sister to Queen Anne Boleyn. Lady Mary's son succeeded to the Ketteringham property, which was presently sold. But she left a pretty estate which came from her mother, Lady Dover, to her daughter Abigail. This lady married John Newton, and their only child was our fascinating Cary, who married Edward Coke. The Heveningham-Newton marriage was celebrated in Westminster Abbey on June 22, 1676, and the happy pair lived at Culverthorpe, or in Pall Mall, where Cary was born.

We hear of Cary's advent in a letter from Mary Eyre, Lady Newton, to her son John, Cary's father. A lady of kindly heart, who had borne seventeen children, was naturally anxious about a precious daughter-in-law who was in the state in which ladies wish to be who love their lords. She writes to Son John that she will not give her daughter-in-law the trouble of writing herself, but she hopes her son will let her hear sometimes:

> "For it will be a great comfort to mee to heare that she goes on well with her great belly . . . wee want you and my Daughter vary much amongst us, but are glad shee hath so good an ocation to keep her in town."

The good old lady's anxieties began early, for the letter was written six months before Cary was born. The date of this important event was June 9, 1680, and I think it was a case of twins, for there was a little boy, John, buried at Haydor in 1684, aged four. He must therefore have been born, as Cary was, in 1680.

So the two little things played together for four years, and then Cary was left alone with her mother. But only for two years more. Abigail Newton died in 1686, and her husband raised to her memory a monument in Haydor Church, and bestowed on her an epitaph which must certainly be quoted:

> "She lived as if she meant to die young, even her youth was pious and exemplary, she diligently hearkened to the law of God, and her Mother, and by the same steps, with a gentle hand, she led into the way of virtue her own offspring. John, her eldest son she prepared betimes for Heaven, and for Grief, almost followed, and now lies buried by him. She left a daughter Cary, about 6 years of age, in whom it appeared what the prudence of a Mother neither fond nor

severe could effect even in so tender years. By a peculiar art her children both stood in awe and loved her. After a tedious illness she died big with child. And was to the last more desirous that should live than she. She had all virtues that became a wife, a Mother, and a Child. She deserved a longer life here, but more an eternal one. She dyed May 11, in the year of our Lord, 1686, and of her age, 26."

Reading between the lines of this quaint panegyric, and looking upon poor Abigail's countenance, which is not exactly melting, I cannot but think that little Cary was often soundly whipped, and never allowed to go near a fire.

And what was the desolate father to do with a little girl of six? He sent her to live with her grandmother, Lady Mary; and if Lady Mary were like her portrait, I am sorry for Cary.

But it would never have done for her to have lived with her father, who was (according to Lady Alice Archer-Houblon) "a gay man, a man of extreme fashion, a courtier, a 'maccaroni.'" There is one little letter among the Holkham Papers which tells a story; why did he not destroy it, the little tell-tale letter?

"SIR,

"The bearer, Mrs. Clutterbuck did last Sessions obtain an Order to refer the maintenance of her daughter's child to you, and as you approved the justness of her complaint, if you'l be pleased to appoint any day, I will meet you at your Gate or elsewhere, for till 'tis ended, she will be very troublesome. My wife presents you, my lady, and all your young ones with her humble service, as do's your obedient humble servant,

"THOS: CHATER.

"TO SIR JOHN NEWTON, BART.,
"AT BARR'S COURT."

Here we have the splendid Baronet, married again, and with young children about his knee, indulging in rural amours with some village Phyllis. No, better that Cary should dwell with her stern-looking grandmother, than that she should be brought up by a father who was not ashamed to submit to an affiliation order made at his own Sessions.

So Cary lived in Jermyn Street with Lady Mary, and doubtless led a very dull life. She does not seem to have had much education. Even for those times her spelling was shockingly phonetic. Indeed, her letters are not much better than those of the Lady of Quality of whom Dean Swift said to

Mrs. Delany, " she scrawled and spelt like a Wapping wench." And her books, into which she stuck her own book-plate, are chiefly sermons, tiresome histories, and moral treatises of the " Whole Duty of Man " type. It must be hoped that sometimes she was allowed to go into the country, either to Culverthorpe or to Barr's Court. If indeed the child ever went to Barr's Court, what a house of wonder for a denizen of Jermyn Street! It was destroyed about 1790, but old Mr. Ellacombe, Vicar of Bitton, remembered how aged persons described it. As long ago as 1540, Leland wrote that it was " a fayre old manner place of stone." " There were niches round the outside of the house," writes Mr. Ellacombe, " filled with colossal leaden statues; there was a large, lofty hall, richly carved and gilt, particularly the fireplace, the shelf of which was supported by 2 large figures of wood: it was paved with black and white marble squares; there was a music-gallery at one end, and a Chapel. The house was square, with square mullioned windows, with Gothic heads and labels. The Porter's Lodge had a large Gateway and a small one, and images about it, and texts of Scripture—one of which I recovered and set up in the Church, at Bitton: there was a drawbridge," etc.

Cary was certainly known to her father's relations. Penelope Newton writes to her brother John from Barr's Court, " Kind love to prety Cosen Cary, and I wish you would bring her down to us." Brother John at this time had a London lodging, " att Mr. Raworths, a Haberdasher of Hatts, att the flying-horse, in Fleet St."

But in 1690 Mr. Newton had a notion that he would marry again, and his flame was for Susanna Warton, niece of Sir Miles Warton, of Beverley, Yorkshire, and widow of Sir Richard Bright, of Badsworth. There were protracted negotiations about settlements, but the marriage was eventually arranged, and Cary had a kind stepmother, and soon a little stepbrother and sister, " Mick and Sue," at Soho Square, in which fashionable part of London Mr. Newton took a house.

Still Cary went on living with her grandmother, till Lady Mary died in Jermyn Street, January, 1696, and she found herself an heiress at fifteen. Now what was to become of Cary?

It would almost appear, from the following letter from old

Lady Newton to her son John, as though Cary might do what she liked with herself, though her father's house, provided the stepmother were willing, seemed her natural refuge.

> "Dear Son,
>
> "I hope my Lady Bright will find Cary to have so much sence as to bee glad to bee with my Lady Bright, if she think fitt to give herself the care of her. I am sartaine it would be a great advantage to her, me Lady Mary hath been vary kind in giveing her allmost all she had, but hath vary much lessened it in forbidding her to live with her Mother [the old Countess of Dover]. Had I been in my Lady Mary's place, I should have made it my suit to my Lady Bright to take her into her Care & Famaly, and so now if shee and you think fitt, it would be a great advantage to Cary. . . . If your Father and I can in any wayes assist you, wee shall be vary reddy. I feare the French woman [probably Cary's maid] is growne sluttish, it will do vary well to continue her if shee be vary neat, or to take one that is so.
>
> "I hope you will let Cary Bury my Lady vary well, according to her Quallyty, not according to her way of liveing. . . ."

Poor pretty Cary! Her grandmother, then, had "not lived according to her quality." Doubtless she was a skinflint, and hoarded up her money. And the Frenchwoman had grown sluttish, and Cary had had a "poor time" of it, as we say. But now she was her own mistress, though so young, and at any rate her mother had seen to it that the child should not be handed over to the mercy of her great-grandmother, Lady Dover. That would have been a case of April in the grip of December.

She must have satisfied old Lady Newton as to the burying, for the bill for Lady Mary's funeral at Ketteringham came to £200. No doubt she went to live with her father and my Lady Bright, and Mick and Sue, but it was not to be for long. A lovely girl of fifteen, of distinguished birth, and with £40,000, was not likely to be without aspirants for her fair little hand. It is much to the credit of the Duke of Leeds that he was early in the field, and resolute. Before two months were passed, he was there with his proposals for his grandson Edward Coke, and, as we have seen, the marriage was celebrated in May, 1696. In July, Lady Mary's executors handed over to the Duke part of the money which that careful lady had saved up by "not living according to her quality." It looks as if, like Silas Marner, she had hoarded up her gold in sacks, trusting neither to Sir Francis Child nor Sir Richard Hoare.

> "July, 1696. Received then of Mr. John Metcalfe by the order and account of the Exors. of the Lady Mary Heveningham deceased, five hundred pieces of gold in a Bagg, and 1120 and 2 guineas and half a guinea; and 232 twenty shilling pieces of gold; and eight and twenty two and twenty shilling pieces of gold, and twenty Lewisdors. And also Received at the same time the summe of one thousand pound more, in part of the legacy given and bequeathed to Mrs. Cary Newton, now the wife of Edw; Coke, Esq. by the Will. . . .
>
> "LEEDS P."

More than £3,000 in ready money, and more to come, besides the landed property at Conisborough in Yorkshire and other places. Old Chief Justice Coke would certainly have approved the match, arch-heiress-finder that he was. But Edward Coke must have been rich if he could afford to agree to a jointure of £2,500 to his widow, besides £500 a year "pin money," and yet to settle lands to the value of £6,000 a year on his heir, and small sums—just enough to keep the wolf from the door—upon his younger children.

Well, Mr. Coke paid £202 11s. 6d. for a diamond ring for his bride, as well he might, when he considered the schedule of his property drawn up by some agent or steward in the year of his marriage.

"*A Perticular of the Estate of Edw: Coke,* 1696."

This document shows that Mr. Coke possessed twenty-two different properties in Norfolk and fourteen in Suffolk ; some houses in London, and lands, many of them broad and fat, in Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Somerset, Gloucestershire, Essex, Kent, Dorset, and Staffordshire, besides fifteen advowsons. The value of the annual revenue from these lands was £6,271, and with Lady Ann's jointure £7,759. The steward promised that "Improveable Values above the present Rents" could be estimated at £3,390, so that "In the future the Estate may be reckoned to be worth £11,151 per annum." This was pretty good, for it was not more than thirty years since Tom Thynne was universally called "Tom of ten thousand" because he had that wondrous income.

Another document, drawn up a little later, is so obliging as to state the outgoings as well as the incomings, omitting all reference to Lady Ann's jointure, and possibly higher rentals.

Proper Estate ...	£4338	14	5	£6455 8 9 per annum
Trust Estate ...	1516	14	4	
Mrs. Coke's Estate	0600	.	.	

Defalcations £2350 1 9 (these include unpaid rents, Taxes, Repairs, Land Stewards Charges, Audits & Court Keeping).

Remains Net Money £4105 7 0

Annual Payments

Interest for £6000	£360	£2030
House Rent for London	300	
Repairs & Parish Duties	50	
Annuities to Mr. Ravenel & Brigitt Moore ...	120	
Mrs. Coke's Pin Money	500	
Allowance for the Children	250	
Domestic Sallarys & Liveries	450	

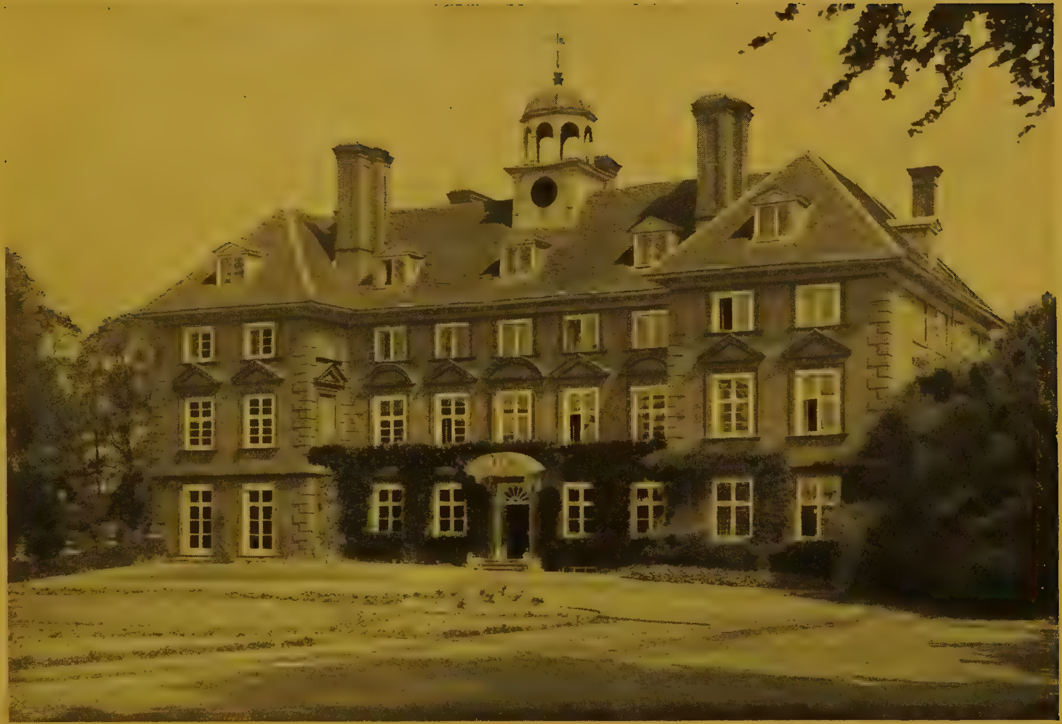
Remains for your Honour's pockett, and clothes, Housekeeping, Stable and Necessaries, £2075.

So the morning of Edward and Cary's life rose gay and cheerful. They were certainly not poor, if only they would have common prudence. Children came rapidly. Thomas in 1697, followed by two daughters, Cary in 1698, and Anne in 1699—Anne, who was afterwards to be of such crucial importance to the Coke family—then followed Edward and Robert. That Cary was proud of her first-born is clear, for she had his portrait painted when he was only a year old: "Dec. 15, 1698, to Mrs. Betty when she paid for my young Master's picture £12." "Nursery Betty," as she is sometimes called, was the "Nana." Nurse Gresham was the monthly nurse, and received £3 for her services, the same sum as Dr.—afterwards Archbishop—Wake received for Cary's churching at St. James's.

They must have gone to Holkham soon after their marriage, for Edward writes thence to his father-in-law a letter to say how they do:

"Sir,

"I am ashamed of not writing to you before, but since the time I have been in the country we have had so many neighbours



THE SOUTH FRONT, TITTENHANGER, HERTFORDSHIRE.

allways with us, that I could not find time to write to anybody, so I hope you will not take this for any negligence. By your giving me so good a wife as she is in everything, you have laid those obligations on me which, if I should study all my life long, I shall never be able to repay."

Besides showing that the young people were happy, the letter goes to show that the old Manor House at Holkham must have been a considerable country mansion, capable of entertaining numbers of guests. For those were days when neighbours came from far, and "dined and took a bed." And it shows that the Cokes were not so finely exclusive as Horace Walpole, who thought country neighbours "one of the worst results of the Fall of our First Parents."

In 1697, they took No. 5, St. James's Square, the Duke of Shrewsbury's house, moving in 1699 to No. 8, succeeding to the tenancy of Anne, Duchess of Buccleuch, widow of Monmouth. Between 1698 and 1702 I find no record of journeys to Holkham, and the Cokes took Sir Thomas Pope Blount's beautiful house at Tittenhanger in Hertfordshire. The rent was £89. There are payments of £250 for house rent to Lady Thanet, and £164 to Lady Plymouth (sister to Lady Ann Coke). These were doubtless for the houses in St. James's Square.

We must do Lady Ann the credit of seeing that her son had been to school. He could spell and express himself like a gentleman. He seems to have had a taste for reading, and added to the library of his ancestors considerable numbers of books, chiefly French, "Les Œuvres de Monsieur Molière," and other worthy classics. By 1702, the date of his and Cary's book-plates, his shelves must have looked quite presentable. The Holkham Library still treasures his beautiful copy of the rare first edition of Wycherley's poems with the portrait. Then we find the ingenious Mr. Motteux dedicating the second volume of his "Don Quixote" to Mr. Coke, and as the "Dictionary of National Biography" states that this translation was published "early in 1712, or at the close of 1711," it behoves us to point out that of the four volumes now at Holkham, the first and second have the date 1700, the third and fourth that of 1703. All were published by Mr. Motteux, and printed for Samuel Buckley at the Dolphin in Little

Britain. Mr. Motteux's dedications are too delightful to pass over. Volume i. is dedicated to the Honourable Henry Thynne, Esq., "a gentleman in whom all the Virtues meet in Perfection, and to whom Cervantes pleads for his Entertainment at Long-Leat, that delicious seat of your Noble Family."

The dedication of volume ii. to Mr. Coke exalts its patron to the skies.

"The great Cervantes begs the Protection of the Noble Mr. Coke. The finest Flowers, principally those of foreign Growth, require the highest shelter, and the warmest sun. Then where shou'd Wit fly in these tempestuous Times, but where the Nobility and Greatness of a House may protect it from the Storm, where a generous hospitality emboldens it to intrude and the warmth of Fortune may cherish and enliven it? The Blessing of a plentiful Estate sets you above all anxieties in this Life, and the Riches of Your Mind secure your Happiness in the Future. To double your Fortune You have a charming and virtuous Partner to share it: She makes Your Life truly happy, for Your Desires are at home. There Cervantes expects a candid Reception. . . ." A great deal more of fine praise is bestowed on Mr. Coke as a "Student and a Critick," and Mr. Motteux has the candour to admit that, like the three other patrons, Mr. Coke has been very generous to him.

Edward must have been specially gratified by Mr. Motteux's praise for him, for his dear Cary had already had the honour of a dedication.

We are now to tread on what is almost sacred ground for those who love Cary, and our gratitude to Miss Mary Pix for her glowing words about our favourite can scarcely be expressed too highly.

Yes, Miss Mary Pix it was who wrote a play called "Queen Catharine," brought it out at Lincoln's Inn, and published it in 1698, with a dedication to "The Honourable Mrs. Cook of Norfolk." (Note, if you please, the "of Norfolk.")

It is a real pleasure to transcribe some of her periods.

> ". . . Snarling criticks might cry down a diversion, which they themselves participate, though their ill Nature makes them grumble at their Entertainment, but when they shall see this Glorious Name in the Front, when they shall know a Lady belov'd by Heaven and Earth,

Mistress of all Perfections the bounteous Powers give, or human Nature is Capable to receive: when, I say, they understand you protect, and like Innocent Plays, they must Acquiesce, and be forc't to own so much goodness cannot choose amiss. Queen *Catharine* . . . will now forget her sufferings, and under such a Noble Patroness remain fixt in lasting Glory; and if my weak Pen has fail'd in the Character of that Great Princess: now I've made her an ample recompense, for where cou'd I have found a Lady of a more illustrious descent, or more celebrated for her Vertues? The name of *Cary* graces all our *English* Chronicles . . . yet that Noble Stock did ne'er produce a lovelier branch, than your fair self, and, as if Heaven . . . design'd you its peculiar blessings, you are given to a Gentleman, of whom we may venture to say, he merits even you?"

I am sorry to say that Miss Pix got no more than one guinea for her dedication. It seems a very trifling recompense for her brilliant prose. But Miss Pix knew a charming lady when she saw one, and I myself have no doubt that her praise of Cary is deserved. No one can read her poor little letters, or look upon her portraits, without feeling, as by instinct, that she was one to love. But Miss Pix does not credit her with learning or letters, and in this I think she was right.

Mr. Motteux's laudation of Edward as a literary pattern may be a good deal too warmly expressed. Dr. Johnson did not say that a man is not upon oath when writing a dedication to a generous patron, but he would have thought so, as he did about the lapidary inscriptions. Mr. Motteux, however, little knew what he was saying when he averred that the blessings of a plentiful estate set Mr. Coke above all anxieties in this life. In less than two years from the date of the dedication, Edward was in pecuniary difficulties, and what with troubles of that sort and the constant illnesses of which his wife and his children were the miserable victims, his life from 1702 cannot have been a merry one, except when he was "merry in drink."

Their second house in St. James's Square was the corner house to the east as you go into the square from York Street. It was insured for £1,200, at an annual payment of £5 12s., this sum to be paid "at the end of sixty days after the said house shall be burnt down, Blown up, Demolished, or Damnifyed by, or by reason of Fire." The rent was £164, and the repairs and parish duties were estimated at £50. But the rent was generally twelve months overdue. In the south gallery of

St. James's Church they were allotted seats Nos. 5, 4, and 3, for a payment of £45, the seats "to be enjoyed as long as they [Mr. and Mrs. Coke] dwell as householders in this Parish, and pay all parochiall and other legall duties . . . and no longer." Here they "sat under" the learned William Wake, the rector, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, the same dignitary who "churched" Cary. They lived here, unlike Lady Mary Heveningham, quite "according to their quality," with a household, apparently, of fourteen men, and eleven maids. From the account of their "Sallarys" paid at Christmas, 1699, it is clear that the servants were not ill paid. The two principal menservants receive £25 and £20, three have £10, the rest vary from £4 to £8. Board wages for two postillions are £3 12s. for a month. Three chief women receive £20, another £15, the rest £4 to £7. Only three or four of them all are unable to sign their names, and, with one exception, these are among the women. But kind Cary pays a bill of £1 for "teaching the Footmen," so these retainers enjoyed special advantages.

Cary must have looked brilliant when she wore her jewels, for the list of "Jewels carried down to Holkham" in 1704 would rejoice Mr. Ruby's heart; and how the country neighbours must have admired! It is a jeweller's list, and gives the number of stones in the various ornaments. Of diamonds there are 1,580, in necklaces, roses, buckles, buttons, earrings, loops "for sleeves and behind the Manto," and in the "laceing for stays." There are 39 rubies; and of pearls, "My own Pearl Necklace, 50 pearls, Another Pearl Necklace, 42, odd pearls, 6," and "a smaller size for tassells, 200." The two little girls, moreover, had jewels, both pearls and rubies. What would not one give to have seen lovely Cary in all her bravery—the diamonds sparkling, the soft pearls caressing that white breast, sometimes adorned with a ruby cross,

> "Which Jews might kiss, and Infidels adore"—

if Mr. Pope will allow the variation.

She lit up her house brilliantly: "For 18 doz. pounds of fine white Wax lights, £21. 12. 0."; and she had a taste for fine furniture, even when she was in serious ill-health, sending to Mr. Will Turing, looking-glass maker at the Eagle and

Child, Bedford Street, for "A very large Tea-table of the finest hard black jappan," and paying £4 10s. for it.

A remarkable quantity of Cary's household bills have been preserved, and it is clear that she and her husband "lived well," though it is impossible to resist the conclusion that the tradesmen cheated them a good deal. It is too clear that they lived extravagantly. The quantity of expensive fish they consumed seems remarkable. Edward and Cary would not have been satisfied, as was Hurrell Froude, by "a bit of the cold endings of a dab." Jowls of salmon were coming into the house even while Edward lay dying—not ordered by the doctors, we may be sure. When they married, we remember that their steward estimated that "there remains for your Honour's Pockett" about £2,000 a year. The account books show that before 1702 they were spending quite £6,000 a year, and, in 1700, had to raise over £2,000 to pay off overdue tradesmen's bills. At any rate, and sad to say, they are very "hard up" in April, 1702, and Cary has to write pleadingly to her Father:

"Dear Sir,

"Sence I saw you last night, Mr. Revinal has promised to lett Mr. Coke have £2000 by tomorrow night at fordess [furthest] and if you could yrselfe, or know anybody that would lend him £1000 more by that time, Mr. Coke and I should take it as a vary great feavour, and wee are both reddy to Joyn in a bond for the security of it, att this time itt will be a vary great obligasion to, Sir, yr most Dutyfull Daughter,

"C. Coke."

How heartrending to think of pretty, gentle Cary in such sore need! But Sir John lent the £1,000, Mr. Coke binding himself by a bond of £2,000 to repay the debt by October 16; and so Cary breathed again, though two months later she is worried about some other business, and writes from Holkham, June 29th, 1702:

"*June ye* 29/1702.

"Dear Sr.,

"A Satterday Peart receaved ye inclos'd papers, and I was glad of haveing so good an oppertunity of sending them by Mr. Diction, beecoues of thare comeing safe too yr. hands, I am deziered when yu. have done wth. um to send them bake agane, I find Mr. Bland is vary cautious in speecking, but I sopoes thare must bee some reason for his brecking of ye trety, when itt was so neare a conclusion, they seme in ye letter to speeck of ye Will, wheather ye folt lyes in yt. or no, I cant tell, but yt. might bee easily seen, I was vary glad to heare yu and my Lady and brother and sister gott home well, for indeed I was afrad my Brother would have gott cold in ye rayn, yr. stay was so vary short then, yt. I hope yu dezinge comeing and makeing a much longer before we leave ye Country, which will bee a great sattisfaction to

"Deare Sr.
"Yr. most Dutyfull
& Affectionnat Daughter
"C. Coke.

"Mr. Coke begs his Duty to yu and his and mine to my Lady, and sarvess to Brother and Sister: Ye Children are all I thank God vary well, and as well as thay can begs yr. Blessing."

No letters of 1703 remain, and all that can be definitely known about that year is that Cary appears to have had twins, for her son Edward was born in that year, and a daughter who is only known from the register of Westminster Abbey: "1703, a young daughter of Esquire Coke of Norfolk, buried March 30"; and from her name "Mary" engraven on a slab which commemorates many of the Cary family, in St. John the Baptist's Chapel.

In 1704 there is a kind letter from Cary's stepmother, formerly Lady Bright, now Lady Newton; it is directed:

"These, for Mrs. Coke, att Holcome in Norfolk, to be sent by the Walsingham Bagg.

"*August* 24.

"I received my Deare Daughter's kind letter yesterday and should much sooner have given you a trouble of this kind but that I know you doe not love writing. Your Father has bin in Lincolnshire this month, he told me he wod leave Mick with me, but when it came to, father and son could not part . . . he lett me know Mr. Coke's favour of a warrant for a Buck, but his house being soe in Rubish that he is forst to lie at the Parsons, he does not know what to do with Venison, but I am sure the seeing Mr. Coke and yourselfe wod have bin a pleasing surprise to both father and son. The same illness your sarvants have had is in all places. Mr. Newton's sarvant that waits of him is now ill of it in Lincolnshire . . . my Lady Newton has had this fevour, but Recovered it sooner than any young body I heare of: that my Deare Daughter may live as long as her Laship. and Injoy soe perfect good health is the heartty wishes of

"Yr. most affect. humble. Sarvant
"S. Newton.

"The publick newse I know you have, private I heare none but that your cos. Bertie is speedily to be married to Mrs. Norby. Lady Fox has a son."

Culverthorpe was "in rubbish," because Sir John was doing great things to the house, the staircase being decorated by the Frenchman Louis Hauduroy. "Cos. Bertie" may be Charles Bertie, eldest son of Charles, of Uffington, who married this year, and Lady Fox is probably the wife of Sir Stephen Fox, whose son, first Earl of Ilchester, was born in 1704.

If there ever was any truth in Duchess Sarah of Marlborough's assertion that Edward Coke offered her £6,000 to procure him a peerage, it cannot have been dreamed of now, for in 1705 the clouds of difficulty were gathering fast. Early that year the Duke of Leeds, Edward's grandfather, hears that the Cokes are going into the country, and he desires to be paid the overdue interest on that mortgage for £6,000, which had been a burden on the family since 1673.[1] Mr. Coke owed £350 last December, and on June 3rd £150 more for interest on the loan will be due. That unlucky loan, made necessary by Robert Coke's election for King's Lynn, had already cost his family £9,600 in interest. The Duke has need of money, and demands speedy payment. Before the year was out, he got his interest. Some effort must be made, say the lawyers, to clear off this heavy mortgage. There is timber that could be felled in Norfolk and Suffolk; a few years previously £700 had been realised from timber in Kent. So a remarkably interesting schedule, "Abbreviat of the Quality of the Timber Trees, their size and length all Boad'd Timber," is drawn up. Arboriculturists will welcome information as to timber in 1705, and the main particulars shall be given. Almost all the trees are oaks, only twenty-four being elms, and sixty-four ashes. From the measurements it would seem as if much of this timber had been planted by the Chief Justice when he acquired the various estates.

	Trees.	*Contents.*
At Huntingfield Park	142	10547 ft.
At Horsham Thorpe Hall	763	36353 ft.
At Aldham	248	8689 ft.
At Blithborough	341	11147 ft.
At Whetwell & Sparham in Norfolk ...	180	9175 ft.
At Billingford, Beckhall & Bintree ...	64	8029 ft.
At Godwick	126	12937 ft.

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[1] See p. 127.

The Ash Growing at Godwick ...	40 ...	1289 ft.
At Mileham & Titteshall	275 ...	15280 ft.
At Longham	170 ...	6870 ft.
At Ashhill	25 ...	2366 ft.

From later documents we learn that though the list was made in 1705, the trees were not felled until 1707 and 1708. They sold for £5,500, and the "charges for felling timber," plus £12 allowed to tenants for "damages done by the timber," came to £66 1s. 9d. Thus the Duke of Leeds' mortgage was paid off. Mr. Auchterlonie, Forester at Holkham, tells me that 10½d. per cubic foot was quite a good price, better than that to be obtained today, allowing for the difference in the value of money.

The money troubles were bad enough, but a greater trouble menaced these poor people, for in 1705 Cary's health was breaking down. The words "consumption" or "decline" are never used, but there can be little doubt about her disease. In May, however, writing to her father to announce the safe arrival of the family at Holkham, she protests that she is well, and gives a happy account of her flock, especially of Bobby, the baby, now a year old.

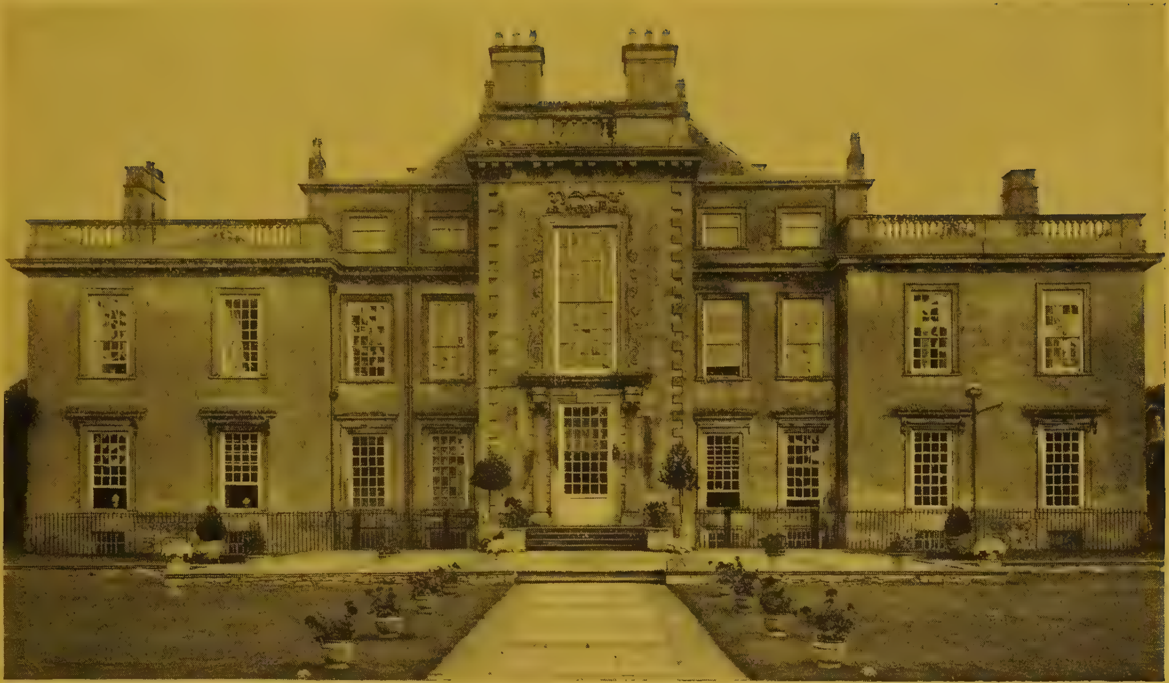
"HOLKHAM,
May 6, 1705.

"I thank God, Deare Sr., wee are all gott well here, and yt. Tommy and Nanny has Continued vary well ever sence wee left London, and are now a taken Physick, as ye Dr. ordered them: thay all bore thare Journey vary well, but if any bore itt better than an other, itt was Bobby, for hee sleep most of ye way, and when hee was awake hee was as well pleased wth. lucking about him as ye rest of ye Childrean Could bee; wee have had extreme fine weather sence wee came wch makes ye Countrey vary Pleasant, wee have been heare so little awhile yt. theare has been but fue people as yett, but thoes yt. has tells mee thare is a vary ugly feavour wth. an Ague yt. goes about mightyly, whch. makes me vary much afrade of Neddy's return of his Ague, but I hope hee wont have itt, for I thank God hee both is, and lucks vary well. . . .

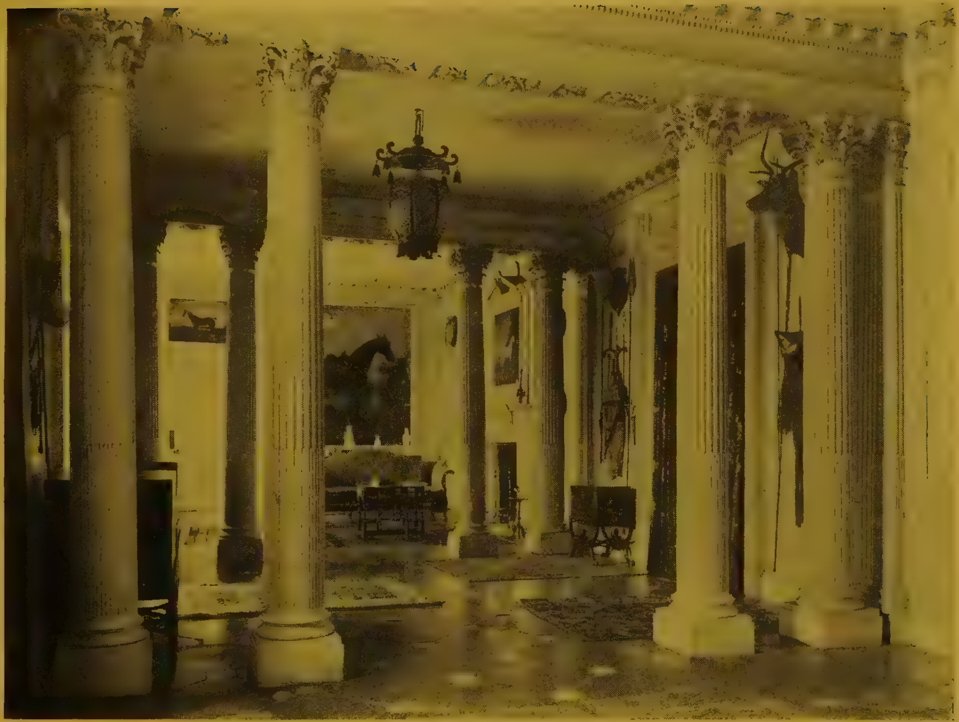
"Pray, Sr., bee so kind to lett mee heare off you, or from you, sometimes, when you are not att lessure yr selfe, lett my Brother, or Sister send me word how you all dou, for I am sure, to heare you are all well will be a great sattisfaction to Dr. Sr. Yr. most Dutyfull and Obident Daughter

"C. COKE.

"Mr. Coke gives his Duty to you, and Sarvess to my Lady, and Brother and Sister and Sally: Children beg yr Blessing."



THE GARDEN FRONT, CULVERTHORPE, LINCOLNSHIRE.



THE HALL, CULVERTHORPE, LINCOLNSHIRE.

Soon she becomes very ill, and a visit to Bath is talked of. But before that, she is able to accompany her husband to Longford to visit their cousin Sir Edward Coke (grandson of Clement Coke), and they take an opportunity, when returning to Holkham, to pass by Culverthorpe, known to Cary in her earlier days, and its church of Haydor, where her mother and brother were buried.

Culverthorpe is, indeed, a charming place now, and others besides Mr. Coke thought so long ago. Michael Newton, who owned it after his father's death, writes that he, with Mr. Wyvill and Mr. Monckton, went there after a "progress in the North," and "Mr. Monckton was so much in Love with Thorpe, that it was with some difficulty he went back to the mansion seat of his family."

Edward Coke to Sir John Newton.

"*June* 13*th*, 1705.

"Sr.,

"I had answered your's sooner, but that itt came to Holkham when I was att Sr. Edward Coke's so that I did not meet with it untill my return from thence—it is three dayes journey from me, the first night we lay at Wisbech, the second at Grantham, and the third att Sr. Edward's: as we came back we went to see Thorpe which you have made so extremely pretty that my wife who had seen it before said she should not have known it again, we saw all the house and the Church, your gardiner gave us very good fruit and cream, so that by the help of that we held on to our inn at Wisbech. My wife has been very ill since she came down but I hope is now something better tho' far from being perfectly well. . . . I know little news of our country having been but a week att home since I came down, being I was att Ipswich horse race, att Sr. Edmond Bacon's, and Sr. Thomas Hanmore's in Derby Shire and have so many more visits to make which together with the Bath will make me be but little here this Summer.

"Yr. most obt. humble servt.

"E. Coke.

"My wife gives her duty to you, both ours to my Lady, the children beg yr. blessing, all here are Servants to my brother and sister."

Another letter, July 26, tells us that Mr. Coke is at Norwich at the Assizes—"my wife is at Holkham and still remains in an ill state of health, we goe by London to the Bath that the Doctor may see her."

In spite of her illness, Mr. Coke can attend race-meetings, and they receive "company" at Holkham. But Cary's property at Conisborough is giving trouble, and the children are all ill. She writes to her father:

"HOLKHAM.
"*Aug.* 23/1705.

"I recevd. yr. letter, Dear Sr. tonight, and Mr. Coke deziers you would send to Mr. Ravenell and hee will come and receve ye fifty pound of you, Mr. Coke had a letter ye Night from Mr. Dixson and sorry to find his Letter hee wrot to him in answer to won hee had from Mr. Dixson some time ago, Should Miscarry, it being about business concerning Connsbrough; they would have us sell some small right we have holding of ye Manner, wch. we are much against, I in perticuler, for I am vary loft to lessen itt in any thing, especially itt being to go to a younger Brother, who allwayes wonts adishions, but can spare none to be taken away; tho' my cough still continues I think myself allmost as well as most in my family, for they are allmost all sick, and amongst ye children, Tommy and Cary have both Ague, but I thank God Neddy has lost his, tho' hee has not recoverd his lucks yet, as my Cosen Monson will tell you, when she sees you, for she and Lady Townshend was heare, and Sr. Tommas Pelham, my lord, and my hee cosen Monson who all saw ye child; ye Duke of Leeds has been extremely ill, itt was thought Apoplectic, but is recovered agane, hee haveing a good proverb of his side. Tommy is now in his hot fitt wch. makes mee hasting this from, Deare Sr., yr. most Dutyfull and Obedient Daughter

"C. COKE.

". . . I am glad to heare my Brother is well agane, I thought itt long tell I hard how he did. . . . I am in continuell feare that Bobby should have the Ague, but thank God hee holds vary well yett."

Next year, Edward is ill, and Cary's Grandmother Newton, now nearly eighty, prescribes her old-fashioned remedies:

"*March ye 7th* (1706).

"I heare, Dear Madam, that my Son, your selfe, and all your Family are well, except my Grandson Coke, it is a great comfort to me that you all at home are so well, but I am sorry that Mr. Coke continue so ill. I have sent you a taste of hungary water and Hesterick water, I think the Hungary water is better than ever I could buy in town; we find great bennifit by drooping to or three droops into one hand, and sufing it up the Nose, it easeth the pain in the head; one that hath great scill tould me it was the best and safest suff anyone could take, if my son Coke be troubled with the headache, I believe he may be prevail with to uese it: I find eas in Rubing my fingers with it and knees that is tormented with the joynt Goute, I heartily pray my son and you may prevail with him to do what you know is good for him; that you all may have much health and happiness is and shall be whilst I breath the dayly prayer of——"

So far the letter is in the handwriting of a secretary, probably one of the old lady's thirteen daughters (very likely her "Daughter Wigfall"), but Lady Newton herself takes the pen to sign herself, in a firm and clear script:

"Yr. Affectionat Mother,
"MARY NEWTON."

Then follows a lengthy postscript in which she says: "If you like these waters and I live till Summer I will send you more"; and she asks Sir John's counsel about some tenants who will not pay their rent; this is written by the secretary, as also the customary formal salutation, "My Daughter Wigfall and all Freines hear present their Services to my Son, and Your Ladyship." Then once more Grandmamma takes the pen herself:

> "My Son was very kind in being so much pleased that I could see to wright to him myself, pray tell him I disier"—

here the old eyes tire, and the secretary resumes her task.

Edward seems to have recovered, but in July Cary is so ill that her life is despaired of. On hearing the alarming news, Sir John at once sends to the famous Dr. Sloane, and bids him go down to Holkham, making all speed. The doctor promises to set off next day, be at Cambridge that night, and reach Holkham the following day, "though he has many patients that can ill spare him." Sir John says that Dr. Sloane is sceptical as to immediate danger, because Cary is said to have been at first "seized with the Colick pains, which are seldom accompanied by a malignant fever." The heat is so great, and Sir John is so much upset by his "melancholy apprehensions," that he excuses himself from accompanying the doctor.

Sloane did not, however, get so far as Holkham, being met on the way by an express to say that Cary was now out of danger. He returned to his anxious patients in London, and Sir John, though he wished the doctor had continued his journey, comforted himself with the reflection that "Understanding my Daughter's constitution so perfectly, he can direct as well as if he had seen her." A week later Sir John writes:

> "Wee are much joy'd att the good news of my deare Daughter's being past all danger, and could not expect but that those cold sweats,

after so great a weakness, would continue for a short time till she begins to recover a little more strength, as I hope she will soon doe, and I believe nothing will contribute more thereto than taking the air in her Coach."

Later, Cary went again to "the Bath," and returned to Holkham, where she was very hopeful as to the results of the "cure"; but her next letter—the last, unfortunately, that has been preserved—shows that she was fast going downhill:

"HOLKHAM.
"*Nov.* 24, 1706.

"I recev'd yr. kind letter, Deare Sr. last post, and am so much better in my health sence I came from ye Bath, as is not to bee Immagin'd. I have had but won fitt, and yt. a short won scence, but I cant much bragg of my Stomack, for yt. is nothing so much as itt was att ye Bath, and I gro rather leaner every day; yt. I am for'st to send my stayes to town to bee made less. Neddy and Nanny has had a return of thare Agues, but ye others are all vary well, Tommy is grone a mighty Horseman and is better and lucks better than I have known him ever scence he had ye small pox. Mr. Brooks gives him a great Charecter as to his Book and says hee is foreder than any of his age. Mr. Coke has put ye hole government of ye Child to him, and indeed he has a vary preaty way of manigine of him. . . . I belleve wee shall not bee in town till after ye Christmas Holladays, Mr. Coke say'd hee was not quite resolv'd, but had a mind to keep his Christmas heare, but if he dus, as soon as twelfe day is over, wee go from hence, so it wont bee above a fortnights difference, I think itt a long time sence I have seen yu, but whare ever I am, shall allways bee Dearist Sr., Yr. most Dutyfull and obidient Daughter

"C. COKE.

"I begg my Duty to my Lady and Sarvess to my Brother and Sister as dus Mr. Coke."

The kind Mother is more ready to prattle of her Children to their grandpapa than to dwell on her own state; and young Tom, if ever he saw this letter in grown-up days, must have been glad that his mother was pleased with him.

But the sands of life were fast running out for both of them. Edward died first, on April 13, 1707, and Cary followed him on August 4.

Shortly before his death poor, desperate Edward apparently thought of raising money by some charges on his estate which would be prejudicial to his children. This called forth a stern letter from Sir John Newton to his unhappy, dying child:

"London,
"26 *March*, 1707.

"Daughter,

"I miss'd of Mr. Groundman at Westminster Hall, but if my son Coke be resolved to levey a fine, it cannot be done otherwise than he mentioned. I am still of opinion it would be most reputable for you, and least partiall to the Children, to have an Estimate of the debts which will best show what can be done out of the personal estate, before he charges his reall with additional provision. I fear you may fall under the censure of studying your own interest before your children which would be an unspeakable trouble to

"Yr. Affect. Father,
"J. Newton."

The same day that Sir John Newton wrote this letter, some lawyer-like hand wrote to him a long and curious statement of Mr. and Mrs. Coke's affairs. The signature is not given, and who the busybody may have been I cannot say, nor why he should have sought to vilify poor Cary. Probably he was one of the family's men of business. The writer says he has sent Sir John as exact a relation as he could get of Mr. and Mrs. Coke's present circumstances, that he may be enabled to proceed "as an affectionate parent and a good Christian in relation to that unfortunate family."

Then he mentions an offensive rumour:

"Its said that Mr. Coke in his Will has given his Lady the personall Estate, and made her Executrix, and that you and Mr. Coke are now persuading her to levy a Fyne in order to load his Estate with £10,000 more, as a further provision for the younger children, and that the Eldest Son (his Father's favourite) will not have £1000 a year at his Father's death, and the 2 younger Sons £200 annuity for life, and the 2 Daughters £500 a-piece. . . . Would it not be highly reasonable for Mr. Coke to alter his Will, and to give the personall Estate amongst the younger Children? . . . and is not Mrs. Coke kindly and generously already considered by her husband in the Joynture he has made her of £2500 a year . . . and with the addition of her own Land (which will make her revenue upward of £3000 a yeare) may she not live in all respects suitable as becomes Sir John Newton's Daughter, and Mr. Coke's Widdow, without the addition of his personall Estate to the so much depressing the poore young Gent?

"And to me it would look (but that I have more charity than to believe it) as if Mrs. Coke after she has made this further provision for her children at the heavy expense of Mr. Coke's Estate, has in view the marrying a 2nd time, and the carrying all off to a 2nd Bed. Else why not to advance the younger children's fortunes out of the personell estate and her own estate in land? . . . There are frequent instances of good and prudent women who will not be trusted with so great a power of injuring their children, for feare they should be tempted to do it afterwards. . . :"

The writer then gives tables from which he shows that Mrs. Coke's fortune amounted to about £40,000, that the personal Estate might amount to £21,000, and that the known debts came to £6,500.

Whoever the writer was, he knew but little about Edward Coke's debts, which were afterwards found to amount to £22,000; and it is impossible to forgive his mean and despicable insinuations about Cary, who loved all her children, and though naturally anxious that the younger ones should not be left badly off, could never have wished to injure her eldest son.

Nothing is known as to the cause of Edward Coke's illness and death. He died at St. James's Square, and the "Bill of Duties of St. James' Westminster for Edward Cooke, Esq. Carried Away" has a mournful interest:

To the Rectory	£1	6	8
To the Clerk	0	14	0
To the Sexton	0	12	0
For the Bells & Knell	0	3	0
For a Certificat	0	1	0
For Ringing the Great Bell when Esq. Cook dyed	0	1	0
	£2	17	8

Aprill 30*th*

Received then of Madam Cook.

He was carried to Tittleshall to the dormitory aboveground, which he was the first to inhabit. No doubt his obsequies were celebrated with the state due to a person of his quality. One of his retainers writes to "his deare cosen":

> "I have got leave for you to make the escutcheon for Mr. Coke who dyed this morning at four o'clock, you must be with me by five o'clock at farthest.
>
> "GEO. WRIGHT.
>
> "*Easter Day*, 13 *Aprill* 1707."

On the back of the letter are fragments of a list of what is necessary: "2 Hatchments; Silk for the Pall; Silk for the Room where the Body lies; Buckram; Escutcheon; a Majestie; Pennons; Target; Sword; Shields; Shaffroons."

A letter from the agent for Mrs. Coke's Yorkshire Estate contains the only posthumous comment on Edward Coke which has survived.

"Pontefract,
"19 *April*, 1707.

"Honered Sir,

"In yesternights newes I finde that my late worthy friend his Honr. Mr. Coke dyed on Sunday Morning last, whose death must needs be very much lamented by his deare Lady, and all his Sweete Children, and you his near Choice friends and Relations, and not only soe but by all others his friends and acquaintance, both for his Noble and Generous receptions and entertainments, and other his obliging deportments and Carriage towards them all, and amongst other his good inclinations, his hospitality towards the poore will doubtless stand him in stead and be requited to him and his whom he hath left behind. I now begg pardon for enlarging on such a subject, who though hee be dead, yet his good deeds remain alive and will follow him and blossom upon his tomb. . . .

"Your most obliged humble servt.
"John Dickson.

"To Sir John Newton, Baronet."

Tradesmen's bills show that Cary was moved to Earl's Court, doubtless for the sake of country air. But all was in vain. She made her Will on July 4; she died on August 4, aged just twenty-seven, and her poor thin remains were carried to Tittleshall. This is certain, for her coffin was seen there. before the burial chamber was finally closed. But in the church there is no memorial, not even a humble tablet, to recall to posterity that Edward and Cary lived and died.

Perhaps the trustees, having to pay debts of £22,000, did not think it right to spend money upon a memorial stone. But as they allowed an expensive funeral, surely they might have incurred the much smaller sum that a local marble mason would have charged. It seems unfeeling. However that may be, their memory will not die at Holkham, where there are four portraits of Edward and three of Cary. Nor would the palace which took the place of the old Manor House that had once sheltered his parents have been built, had they not given to the world their remarkable son Thomas, a sketch of whose career shall be the last of these records.

CHAPTER XX

THOMAS COKE

(Born June 17, 1697; died 1759. K.B. 1725; Baron Lovell, of Minster Lovell, 1728; Viscount Coke of Holkham and Earl of Leicester, May 9, 1744. Married, July 2, 1718, Lady Margaret Tufton, third surviving daughter of Thomas, fifth Earl of Thanet, by Harriet, daughter of Henry Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle; Born June 16, 1700; Baroness Clifford, 1734; died 1775.)

SO the forgetful grave closed untimely over the poor young parents, and what was to become of their five small children—Thomas, who was nearly ten; Cary and Anne, who were nine and eight; Neddy and Bobby, who were four and three?

Thomas, the heir, was the important child to consider, and his interests were safe in the hands of trustees and guardians: Sir John Newton, his grandfather; Sir Edward Coke, of Longford, his father's cousin; John Coke, another cousin; Mr. Charles Bertie, of Uffington, uncle of Lady Ann Coke.

But Lady Ann, as the paternal grandmother, began to have a notion that she had rights in the matter. The Duke of Leeds made enquiries, and His Grace was informed by Counsel that "the Guardianship by Law belongs to Lady Ann, but if Sir John appeals to Chancery, it would be given to him, Lady Ann being under coverture."

No doubt Colonel Walpole moved his wife to make this *démarche;* he would at once scent plunder to be gained from the guardianship of so wealthy a child as Thomas. But Lady Ann, perhaps, guessed what her husband would be at, and had scruples. Besides, why should she be bothered with the children at her age?

She therefore wrote as follows to her father:

"My Lord,

"The next day but one after my last to Your Grace, I was seized with such disorder all over me that I thought I should have an illness, but upon takeing a sweat I broke out with several boyls, one upon my right hand wrist, which is yett so bad I cannot make use of itt to write to your Grace.

"My Lord, I received a Civil letter from Sir John Newton, he is desirous to have the Guardianship to be determined in some more amicable way than a Court of Chancery would seem to be, and I am so farr from being desirous to dispute that business with him, that I think my Grandchildren may be much better under his Care than they could be under mine, tho' I woud doe all that ever I could be capable off for em.

"But, my Lord, if Sr. John should dye before me, which God knows Life is so precarious, one Can't Judge who may goe first, or how soon or how late, in that case I should be unwilling to be without my right. I earnestly desire your Grace will determine the matter.

"Your Grace's Dutyfull Daughter
"Ann Walpole.

"*Oct.* 3, 1707."

Three weeks' negotiation suffices to bring her to complete reason. Clever Sir John has suggested that she should take charge of Bobby, the baby. Thoroughly frightened at such a prospect, she writes Sir John a letter in which her character may be seen as in a mirror:

"Beckhall.
"*Oct.* 23, 1707.

"Sr.

"I was Apprehensive An Ugly Humour I have had settle in my right hand wrist might have kept me longer than this before I could have Any use of It, and therefore I made my Servant write for me to my Lord Duke to beg his Grace would see to the Ajusting the matter of the Guardianship of my younger Grandchildren with you.

"I do Assuer you it was not from Any desire I had of taking that power out of your hand that made me Inquire Into who's right it was, for I was fully satisfied It must be much more to the Dear young Won's Advantage to be in the main under your care, tho' I would take All that I Am capable of for them; and for Sr. Edward Coke he has shown himself so very extraordinary A Kind Relation to them that I cannot but agree to whatever he desires for them. And I have so much more tender regard for everyone of them then for Pleaseing myself, that I dare not now desire bobby should make so long a Jorney As 'tis to this wattery place thus late of the year. But when It may be without hazard to any of them, you would make me As happy as I now can be in letting me have Any one of them here, tho' but for a litell time. Sr. There never was Any other writing pass between my Son and me for my Jewels besides a note payable on my demands for tow thousand five hundered pounds. I hope you'l forgive me sending you such a Blur'd paiper my hand being yet so weak. . . .

"Your Reall Servant,
"Ann Walpole."

Sir John Newton, then, became guardian-in-chief; he and his colleagues held monthly meetings, and the minutes show a careful attendance by the four guardians. In 1710, Mr. Bertie died, and his place was not filled up.

Where was the heir to live? Mrs. Stirling ("Coke of Norfolk and his Friends") says he was sent with his brothers and sisters to Barr's Court in Gloucestershire, to be brought up by Sir John. But this is a mistake, Sir John troubled Barr's Court as little as possible, residing almost entirely in Soho Square,[1] adjourning occasionally to a house at Richmond, or, more rarely, to his house of Culverthorpe in Lincolnshire.

Thomas was sent to live at school with one Mr. Ellis, who received young gentlemen of quality at Isleworth,[2] and there he remained until April, 1711, when he went to live with Sir Edward Coke at Longford, his health being far from good at Isleworth.

Mr. Ellis provided "home comforts" to a certain extent, in consideration of the £50 a year paid him for Tom's "board and schooling." But there were very many extras, such as the French, dancing, fencing, and drawing masters, at fairly expensive figures. There were ten ushers, and it is curious to find Master Thomas giving these Gentlemen "tips" every year, something like a pound apiece. He took four servants with him, and presently had horses and a groom. All were in charge of a veteran family retainer, Mr. Longstrath, who lodged outside, acted as paymaster, and could, no doubt, like Miss Honeyman's Hannah, be trusted with "untold gold and uncorked brandy." He had been servant to Tom's father and grandfather. Nor must Mr. Brook be forgotten, the tutor to whom "the whole government of the child" had been committed at Holkham in 1706. He went to Isleworth at a salary of £50, and with the promise of the first living that should fall vacant, excepting always that rich "plum," the parsonage of Cleeve. In a few months the guardians are so much pleased with Mr. Ellis "and his Sister," that they vote a piece of plate, value £20, to each of them, and Tom goes to choose the plate.

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[1] "Soho Square, which had just been built (1685), was to our ancestors a subject of pride with which their posterity will hardly sympathise" (Macaulay).

[2] Another of his pupils was Heneage Legge, son of Lord Dartmouth, afterward Mr. Justice Legge.

Tom has a fair amount of liberty, and from time to time crosses the water to visit the Duke of Leeds at Wimbledon, Sir John in Soho or at Richmond, Lady Ann when she is in London, and, less frequently, to pay his duty to my Lord Rochester or the Duke of Buckingham.

He is a generous boy, often "tipping" his little sisters and brothers, treating them on one occasion to "cheese cakes and oysters"—so good for them—taking them to see the "Drummedare," or the "strange Birds and Beasts." He is an ardent playgoer, and sometimes carries Brother Neddy with him to see a play.

And what happened to the sisters, Cary and Ann? It is probable that they were put out to some kindly foster-mother, as French children used to be. Later, it is clear that Lady Newton took charge of them in Soho Square, where they would find their step-uncle and aunt "Mick and Sue," and, next door, Mr. Gabriel Roberts and his beautiful boy Philip—but that is a story not yet to be unfolded.

There remained, then, only the two little boys, Neddy and Bobby, to be disposed of, and they were left, where they were already, in charge of Mr. Casey, another worthy retainer, and his wife—persons rather superior, perhaps, to Mr. Longstrath. Shortly before their father's death, their mother being too ill to continue to look after them, the hapless little mites had been bundled off with their nurse and in their trailing skirts—a portrait at Althorp shows the dress of little boys at this period, made like a lady's gown, of satin, with bodice, waist, and full skirts—to the back parlour of good Mr. Casey, who took in other lodgers, whether old or young.

"*Feb.* 24, 1707.

"Mem: That Mr. Casey does agree for sixty pounds to be paid quarterly to board the 2 little Master Cokes and their Nurse, and that they shall have the Back Parler wherein they now lodg, and that Mr. Casey is to find coals for a fire there and Candles, and to Wash the 2 Masters. . . .

"Note, that Mr. Casey is to teach the 2 young Gentlemen their Books, in to this bargain, and that they are to dine abovestairs with their other borders, and if it is desired by Sir John Newton, they are in Summertime to have a room to lodge in abovestairs.

"Witness to this agreement, HUMPHREY SMITH."

Neddy was four, and Bobby three! How pitiful that the little creatures should begin their life thus early in a strange home! But there is evidence that Mr. and Mrs. Casey were kind to the orphans, who lived with them till they were almost grown up.

The children settled, it was the guardians' next duty to attend to the embarrassed finances of the family. This they did with vigour and skill. Edward Coke was found to have died £22,000 in debt. This sum would include their many mortgages, and a vast number of large tradesmen's bills. So everything must be sold, except family pictures, books, and a few other objects of special interest which could be bought in for the heir. The whole personal estate, it was thought, would hardly suffice for the tradesmen.

Mr. Humphrey Smith, the excellent agent or steward at Holkham, has left, in his fine script, a statement about the sale at St. James's Square, and its results.

				£	s.	d.
Goods sold at Auction	1738	2	5	1951	17	11
The Best Coach	41	–	–			
2 old ditto and 2 chariotts	40	–	–			
7 Coach Horses	75	5	–			
A Saddle Horse	7	10	6			
Quilts etc. sold to Sir John	38	–	–			
Shasemarine	7	–	–			
A shase to Mr. Wright	5	–	–			
Goods appraised to the Heir	226	16	–			
To the Younger Children	5	–	–			
Goods unsold which are still in the House	50	13	–			
To Sir John Newton, a Bookcase, a Clock, and a harpsechord	20	–	–			
Total of the aforesaid goods				2254	6	11

PLATE SOLD

Plate sold at Auction	1716	18	8¼	2061	5	2
4 Muggs for the Children	8	4	4¾			
Guilt plate at 6s. per oz.	276	6	0			
Plain dressing plate at 5s. & 2d. per oz. ...	59	16	1			
				4315	12	1
A spicebox and Standish to Sir John				2	–	–
Books kept for Mr. Coke				193	8	–

Mr. Smith's last entry is the most interesting, for we know from another source that the library at Holkham had been sent up to London. That would consist of the remnant of the Chief Justice's books which his[1] "ungrate posterity" had preserved. We could have spared many of Edward's and Cary's books, but Sir John and the other guardians deserve all the gratitude that the present Cokes can give them, for buying in the great ancestor's old tomes.

There is a printed catalogue of the Sale of Plate at Holkham, and another at the Bodleian. The auctioneer's name is not given, but the date is December 1, and the place St. James's Square. The list is insignificant when compared with the Chief Justice's plate chests, but anyone might be glad to possess Edward Coke's silver, none of it later than Queen Anne. The catalogue is divided into three parts: "New sterling," which was not to go under 5s. 5d. per ounce; "old sterling," which might be had at 5s. 2d.; and the "wrought and Gilt Plate" was to be 6s.

These rules as to price do not seem to have been strictly observed, for the Duke of Newcastle buys Two large Pair of Sconces with double branches at 5s. 2d. Mr. Hyde has to pay as much as 6s. 3¼d. for a set of six sconces, and Mrs. Broom 6s. 1d. for another set.

There are basons and ewers, "knurled" branched candlesticks, any quantity of trencher plates, a "Tea Kitchen with a chimney," a "Bohea Teapot," an egg-stand, etc. In Cary's set of gilt dressing plate, there were forty pieces, and they would fetch more than £276 today!

Of the twenty or more family portraits bought in from the St. James's Square house at £183, many are at Holkham now.

Then there were forty-eight family portraits sent from Holkham, valued at £50, and housed by Sir John in Soho Square. Of these not more than a poor half-dozen remain. Old Cokes, and Knightleys, and Wheatleys, and their kin, to make the walls look venerable! Children, perhaps, in stiff Tudor costumes. Men and women whose features would have historical interest today. How can one forgive a family which made no account of forty-eight portraits of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? I fear that the chief offenders may have been our present hero, Thomas, and his wife, Lady Margaret. His passion for a new Holkham, his taste for everything "classic" and Italian, and her desire that pictures on the walls should correspond in smart effectiveness with her splendid new furniture and hangings, must account for their contemning the dusty ancestors. It is as difficult to forgive Thomas, first Earl of Leicester, for this impiety, as it is to forgive his successor, Thomas William, who might have had his lovely wife and three handsome daughters painted by Sir Joshua and Gainsborough and Romney and Hoppner, but contented himself with one "Kitcat" of each by Mr. Barber.

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[1] See p. 315.

And Carey's beautiful jewels, what of them?

The guardians agreed to purchase her "own" pearl necklace, of forty-four pearls, for four hundred guineas, for the use of the heir. It is officially described as "a large pearl necklace." This came into possession of Thomas William, first Earl of the second creation, but it has not remained at Holkham to adorn necks as fair as Cary's. Her diamonds and rubies must have been sold in some private manner, for they disappear, and have left no record. The whole sum expended on family goods "for the use of the heir" amounted to £1,250.

The house in St. James's Square was let to James Douglas, Duke of Queensberry, apparently for only a short time, for in 1708, Mr. Bertie reports that my lord of Exeter needs a house for three months, and would send to see it. In 1711, the eighth Duke of Norfolk is said to have lived in it, and from an allusion to it in a letter from young Thomas Coke, January, 1713—"I am sorry that Duke Hamilton's death is an hindrance to the rent of the house"—it should seem that Beatrix Esmond's Duke Hamilton had been its occupant.

During the years when the heir lived with Mr. Ellis at Isleworth, he never once went to stay with Sir John Newton or any other relation, though no doubt he saw some of them from time to time. His estates in Suffolk were looked after by one Mr. Rogers, and those in Norfolk and other counties by the admirable Mr. Humphrey Smith, who appears, and always to his credit, in many of the Holkham papers of this time.

Mr. Smith is active in every direction: rents are raised, churches on the property are put in repair, and he advises the guardians of contiguous estates coming into the market; whereupon they add a large farm to the estate at Sparham, the oldest landed possession of the Cokes (this is bought from the Earl of Yarmouth); they pay £1,550 for Mr. Dove's estate adjoining Castle Acre, and £2,650 to the Bishop of Chester (in 1713) for Laxfield in Suffolk.

A striking testimony to Mr. Smith's foresight is found in a minute of the guardians concerning the damage done to the farms by a gale on February 15, 1713—the damage in Norfolk was estimated at £503 8s. 10d., in Suffolk at £591 10s. "Had not Mr. H. Smith, at his first coming to live at Holkham, raised the Marsh Wall, all the whole levell had been drowned, and the wall blown up, for, by reason of the Great Wind, never so great a Tide was known in the memory of man."

Mr. Smith was also a man of tact, and cultivated pleasant relations with Sir John, sending him game—"7½ brace of partridges, a Leish of Hares, a Phesant and a Bittern" on one occasion, and, on another, a "Harvest Goose, a Pea-foule, and a Turkey" to my Lady Newton. He saw to it that the proper number of deer were killed, and suggested—long before it was carried into effect—the disparking of the deer parks at Huntingfield and Elmham, and making a deer park at Holkham. Mr. Ardenne, in "Lothair," would have frowned on Mr. Smith, and pointed out the difference between "Deer Parks and Parks with Deer in them." Holkham would be but in the latter category, while the others were ancient, real deer parks.

Amid all the worries of this summer of 1707, Edward Coke's debts, and his daughter Cary lying on her death-bed, good Sir John Newton did not forget that deer must be killed, and were good to eat. The park-keeper at Elmham sends him the following letter:

"*June* 16, 1707.
"ELM: PKE.

"HOND. SIR.

"Yesterday I received yr. warrant for a Buck and alsoe an order to serve it soe soon as they should be fatt and warrentable, wch. shall be obeyed, and as well served as ye park will afford in ye first week of July, untill wch tyme I humbly crave yr forbearance, for ye pke consists of a cold soyle, and ye spring proves generally backward. Sr. the Coach Inns at ye Green Dragon in Bpps Gate Street and his constant price for Carriage of a Buck is Ten Shillings, being two days stage from Norwich. The Pke will afford this Season 24 Brace of Bucks concerning wch I have acquainted Mr. Smyth with all ye pticulars as required by him. Sr. the post before I send up ye Buck you shall Receive another letter and Diligent Care shall be used in ye Killing and packing up of ye Buck for ye Sweetest and speediest delivery by

"Sr yr most obedient servt.
"Tho. Knight.

"For the Honble Sr John Newton
"This
"To be left with ye porter of ye Late Edw. Coke's, Esq. in St. James' Square, London."

There were deer, also, in the Chace at Minster Lovell, and Master Thomas was the cause of a pretty disturbance about them. Anxious to feast on his own venison in July, 1708, and the warrants from Elmham and Huntingfield being all disposed of, Mr. Longstrath—"Officiously," as Mr. John Coke said—wrote a pressing letter to Mr. Wheeler, tenant and "woodward" of Minster Chace, to say that his master must and will have a buck.

Presently my Lord Conway complains to Sir Edward Coke that Mr. Wheeler has killed a deer in Wychwood Forest, a royal demesne adjoining Minster, and though he is anxious to avoid any unpleasantness, Her Majesty's rights must be maintained. Mr. Wheeler tried to justify himself, but the dispute drags on for a year, when the famous Lord Rochester (Lord Conway's father-in-law) writes to hope that his friend Mr. Bertie will keep Mr. Wheeler in check. So all the guardians were dragged into a controversy with Her Majesty's Rangers, because a boy of eleven wanted venison for dinner!

He is altogether a forward youth. By the end of October he has assumed a periwig and ruffles, and Mr. Bertie and Sir Edward Coke write to Sir John about it, though the recent death of Queen Anne's husband and its political consequences are uppermost in their minds.

"Uffington,
"*Sunday Oct. 31st,* 1708.

"Sir,

"I shall be very ready to concurr with you in anything that may be judg'd for the service of the Heir I hear that I shall find him improved both in his Learning and Dancing, and that hee is gott into a Perriwigg like a Young Beau. . . . The Prince's death must be a great affliction to her Majesty, and fills our Politicians' heads with new

Speculations. God send us once happy in an honourable safe and Lasting Peace, after the miseries of a 20 years Warr, shall be the Collect for this day, and the Last dash of my pen from Sir, Your most obliged and humble Servant

"CHA. BERTIE."

Mr. Bertie had been Envoy to Denmark in his youth, and Prince George's death had thus a peculiar interest for him.

Sir Edward is detained from joining the guardians at their meeting by cruel attacks of the stone. He writes to Sir John:

". . . . the affection I have for so near relations, and in their circumstances as Orphans, does extremely heighten my inclination to do 'em all the services I am capable of, but your parental care and great kindness for these beauteous remains of the Late Deceas'd, with the friendly assistance of Mr. Bertie and my cosen John Coke, will make my absence no ways inconvenient to the management of the Guardianship. . . .

"I think you extremely in the right to have that complacency for Mr. Coke as to fall in with his desires that will have in their consequence no ill tendency on his moralls . . . there is no harm in a periwig or ruffles, and often new clothes, his estate sets him above the consideration of these things. I am with all my soul concerned for the poor Queen, who has done honour to the marriage state . . . she has given a regal example of conjugal affection, and yet I doubt it is not become a general fashion in town: The example of her Uncle, I believe, was more followed, and the subjects easyer conformed to it. . . .

"EDW. COKE."

Sir Edward neither honoured nor disgraced the marriage state. He died a bachelor, though he was not indifferent to "the ladies."

Tom Coke's schooldays were pleasant enough, I dare say, though five servants and a tutor must have been rather a nuisance, unless he liked being treated as a Prince. He gave his mind to his studies, and enjoyed the recreation of fishing and hare-hunting. But his health gave serious concern to his guardians. Ague—we remember how much Cary dreaded that fell disease—ague had its grip upon him, and sometimes he is obliged to leave school and be under a doctor's charge in London. For evidence of his frequent illnesses, there are the heavy bills paid to Dr. Ratcliffe and the apothecary, and "Flannel for my Master's Stommock," ordered by good Mr. Longstrath. Mr. Ellis heartily regrets this loss of time, "knowing it may be difficult to retrieve it, and long absence creates in young gentlemen an aversion to school." But he must do Mr. Coke the justice to say that he never had a greater inclination to study. Could not the doctor permit him to ride to Isleworth for an hour or two, when he was well enough? Early in 1711, Tom returns to Isleworth and writes: "I am much better and today took a Purge." The handwriting is childish still. But Sir Edward Coke is now thoroughly alarmed, thinks that Isleworth must be unhealthy (as no doubt it was), and invites the heir to go and live with him at Longford: "You shall receive an affectionate welcome as is most due to so near a relation and the Head of my Family."

He is in such a hurry, that the invitation is sent off without any consultation of colleagues, and for this he apologises to Sir John.

By April 2, Tom, accompanied by Cousin John Coke, has reached Longford, though late, owing to the bad state of the roads.

The heir of the Cokes must not travel like a private person. Humphrey Smith comes up from Holkham to take charge, and the cost of the journey amounts to £36. It must be said, however, that £4 of this was spent on cock-fighting by the way.

At length they arrive, and Sir Edward hastens to report progress to Sir John:

> "Sir,
>
> "My Coz. Coke's being here gives me great Thought and Concern, for I know his learning and Manners would have been better carry'd on and Formed under the tuition of Mr. Ellis, than here: nothing but so extraordinary an Occasion could have made me invite him down: Meantime I shall take all the care I can of him, and doe what becomes me, tho' it will be something a Nice point for me to Intermeddle when his innocent Indiscretions makes [*sic*] it necessary. . . . I find him very thin, but I hope from following the Doctor's prescriptions, and observing of a proper Kitching Diet, and suitable exercise, his Condition may be restored.
>
> "Be pleased to let me know if anything be said by the other Family upon the manner of his being fetch't from School, and his Coming Down hither,
>
> "Yr. most obt. Servant,
> "Edw. Coke."

By the "other Family," he means, of course, Lady Ann and the Duke of Leeds.

THE SOUTH FRONT, LONGFORD HALL, DERBYSHIRE.

Next month a tutor, Mr. Wilkins, is engaged, and Tom, writing to Uncle Newton for some money and a playbook, hears that "Mr. Wilkings is much commended in many letters to Sir Edward," and says, "I am glad my Brother Neddy comes on so well in his book, and I hope when brother Bobby comes to his age he will love [it] as well." Very proper sentiments in an elder brother.

Sir Edward was careful as to the soundness of the tutor's principles; and telling Sir John that "Tom is now in very good health, Learns his book, and plays with an equall good spiritt, and is hitherto very good and regular," adds:

> "Mr. Wilkins is come into England, and I have writ to his friend Mr. Chamberlain to wait on you. The character that is given of him is very great. The sooner that my cosen has a Governor, the better, now that he is from Schole. The Guardians should be satisfy'd as to Mr. Wilkins principles, whether they will be such as will prompt him to educate a young Gentleman in a firm Love and Zeal to the constitution of our Government in Church and State."

Mr. Wilkins communicates his first impressions to Sir John in a letter which the Rev. Mr. Collins himself could scarce have improved upon, but it is too long to be quoted verbatim. He is wise enough to be so much pleased with Longford and Sir Edward as to make him wish he could spend all his life with him and "with my Esq. Coke." But they are to travel abroad, and he does not care to think of the grief of being forced to leave Longford. Prudent Mr. Wilkins! And what a good hand he writes!

> "As for my young Gentleman, he is of extraordinary good natural parts, of a great capacity, who has applyed himself extremely much in reading some of the best classical authors, and Latin as well as English Poets, and is nothing at all wanting but a continuance of the same studies, till his flattering age be a little more settled. I don't write this as if I questioned his good humour and obedience to me, for in these few days he has shown them both, and I must praise myself very happy to be with such a Young Gentleman.
>
> "This only gives me a little uneasiness, that his delight is so much in Cock fighting, and although I tried to dissuade him quite from it, yet seeing that this diversion does not hinder his course of studies, I've reduced this pleasure to once a Week, since it is most impossible to take him quite off from it. I wish you and the other Respective Guardians would give us leave to make a tour through some part of England, to let my Gentleman see something of his own Country before he sees others."

Tom adds his petition for travel, and as Sir John delays granting permission, he becomes impatient. On July 9 he writes:

> ". . . This is to desire you to send me a Sadle, for I want to go and see England, and the Peack, for if I dont go soon it will be so Cold, and the ways will be so bad that I can't go. And if I don't go while I am here, I am afraid I shall not go before I go beyond Sea. And I heard Mr. Wilkins say you'd told him that I was to go, and I have no sport here now, Cock fighting is out and hunting not yet come in.
>
> "*July 9th*, 1711."

July 21 is come, but still no answer from Sir John. Tom returns to the charge, like the brave boy that he is:

> "HOND. SIR,
>
> "I hope you receiv'd my Letter wherein I desired the favour of you to send a sadle for me, and to give me leave to go and see England, and if I don't go now it begins to be cold, and the days are so short and I can't go. And now I have no diversions but shooting which is at this time of year very dull, and I don't much care that I should shoot, and I forced to shoot sparrows and such little birds, of which there are most about the house, and I must not shoot here because it frights Mrs. Chaney, and I am forced to go a mile or two to shoot 5 or 6 little birds. Sir Edward bids me desire you to give a warrant for a buck to my brothers and sisters. I hope you will favour me with an answer.
>
> "Yr. most dutifull Grandson, and humble Servt.
>
> "T. COKE."

Tom's letters are very ingenuous and pleasant in that they show the good relations between the grandfather and the boy. He was now fourteen years old, and how forward, how spirited he is! Sir John need not have been so slow, but perhaps he thought it good discipline for so impatient a lad. Some weeks previously the guardians had decided that Thomas should go for a little tour to the Peak, and so they visit Chatsworth, "Eden Hole and the Devil's Nose," Hardwick, and other celebrated places, finishing up with four gay days at Nottingham, for the races, where Tom loses a guinea "at betting."

Travelling with a friend, how pleasant it is, and how mutually revealing as to character and disposition. But travelling with a pupil of Tom Coke's sort could not have been an unmitigated joy to Mr. Wilkins, who, by August 22nd, has come to know his young Gentleman more intimately.

"To Sir John Newton.

"Longford,
"*August 22nd*, 1711.

"Honoured Sir,

"To acquit me of my duty, I take the pen out of Mr. Coke's hands, and return you hearty thanks in his and my name for your so kind willingness in sending whatever Mr. Coke has so boldly asked of you hitherto. Last Saturday we returned from Nottingham race, and I am extreamly pleased to tell you, Sir, that none of Mr. Coke's age could ever bear the fatigues of such a journey as that to the Peak was, better than he did, nor could anybody be more curious in inquiring about things which offered themselves to our eyes. Mr. Coke, indeed, doeth not want curiosity to cultivate his good natural parts, nor is it any trouble to him to do his Exercises well whenever he has a mind to; And he could most always perform his lessons to everybody's satisfaction, if his flattering youth (which excuses many a times, and makes me connive abundance of faults committed by one that is not yet sensible how a Gentleman should distinguish himself from a Child or a Schoolboy) would permitt, and not too much distract his thoughts."

Mr. Wilkins begs Sir John to authorise, by writing to his grandson, "my daily and hourly instructions and corrections," for "your letters to Mr. Coke make a wonderful great impression on his mind."

This same summer Tom goes a-visiting to Lord Ferrers, Lord Chesterfield and Sir Nathaniel Curzon, and by way of improving his mind Mr. Wilkins takes him for a few days to Cambridge. Evidently Tom beat his tutor about the cock-fighting. It was almost as costly a pursuit as golf. On one cocking match, including bets, Tom spends £7. He gets new clothes "against the Derby Ball," and attends that festival, a curious item of his expenses being "Sweetmeats for the Ladies, three shillings."

When autumn is declining into winter, and discussions about the young man's education grow more and more serious, Cousin John Coke, who, about this time, refuses a present offered him by the guardians as an acknowledgment of his help in counsel, and causes Sir John to cry out, "He carries the Punto too high"—John Coke finds the boy's behaviour better fashioned, and hears that he gains great reputation among the gentlemen of the county; and yet, and yet, Sir Edward is not comfortable about it. A letter to Sir John is an admirable specimen of this excellent man's qualities of heart and head, and his care for his ward.

" LONGFORD,
" *Oct.* 27, 1711.

" SIR . . .

" This air agrees with my cosen's health, for he grows tall, is plump, and looks fresh and vigorous . . . yet I can't prevent his conversing with my servants and ordinary people in the neighbourhood, which may have no good influence upon his morals, neither his going too often abroad an hunting with the Gentlemen about us, which I find makes him grow more cool to his studyes, and less tractable to his Governor: his passions are strong and violent, and should be early regulated, civilized and softened, and this requires a Governor of sound judgment and admirable addresse.

" My Cosen withall has a quick apprehension, a faithful memory, and a good understanding, qualities that, if they take a happy turn and tincture from a good education, will make him an ornament to his country, and a comfort to his friends: else he may prove unfortunate in all respects to his friends, himself, and his estate, for he will be either very virtuous, or—for his sanguine complexion will not let him act a moderate, lazy part: what I have here touch'd upon, was considered by my Cosen J° Coke and me, and we were both of an opinion that his education would be better answered to have him forthwith sent abroad, but since the nereness of the plague makes that not so advisable, then to Christ Church in Oxford, where he might be under a Tutor for his studyes recommended by Doctor Smallridge, have the countenance of Doctor Atterbury,[1] the Dean, and to have Mr. Wilkins as his governor with him, and his servants and horses to attend him: there he will live subject to the Government and discipline of the Colledge, and be early brought to a more manly and better conversation; onely there must be special care taken that he never goes to the Tavern at all nor anywhere els without his Governor, and to have him make no bad acquaintance. He is to be indulged there in his field sports sometimes, as to come in relief to his studyes, for without that you can't keep him in any moderate temper. My Cosen Jo. Coke, will be in town next week, when he will discours you fully upon what I have writ here in short: please not to divulge what I here mention to you. . . ."

The boy is a true Coke; give him his field-sports, and you can do what you like with him, but he is not easy to manage.

Unconscious of the concern he is giving to his elders, he writes placidly to thank Grandfather Newton for what he has sent, and is glad to hear that six more shirts are to come on Saturday: " But Mr. Coke did not acquaint you with all the things that I wanted, for I have but two Caps, and they are both torn, and I desire you would be pleased to send me some Caps and Hankerchiefs." (Caps of silk or velvet were necessary for shaven heads when the periwig was laid aside.) "I have got a new Suit of Cloathes which fitt me very well. . . . I hope my lady has had no fitts of the stone since I heard from you. I desire you would be pleased to send me a Playbook, for now the nights grow long, and I have nothing else to divert me."

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[1] Francis Atterbury (1662-1732), Bishop of Rochester and Dean of Westminster, 1713. Deprived and exiled as being a Jacobite, 1720.

There was no library of lively literature, then, at Longford. Did Sir John send down the plays of Congreve, or Etherege, or Vanbrugh? or did he think the works of Monsieur Molière at once more amusing, and less immoral, and calculated to improve the young man's French?

Tom has a care for the fit of his clothes, but grieves Sir Edward by not making a proper use of them, so Sir John is begged to recommend him to keep his waistcoat buttoned, this cold season. Also, will Sir John advise him to pay a greater deference to his Governor, and avoid "Rustic Conversation"? But perhaps it was the *mode* among the "Young Beaux" to wear their waistcoats unbuttoned, and how can you avoid "Rustic Company" if you go "Cocking and an-hunting"?

Now a warning voice is heard from Holkham. Honest Mr. Humphrey Smith is convinced that his master will be kidnapped, or held to ransom, if he is sent abroad. (In Norfolk, they have never had a good opinion of "them furriners.")

Sir Edward consults the old Duke of Leeds on this point, and is reassured. It is reasonable, he thinks, to conclude that there is no ground for Humphrey Smith's surmises of Mr. Coke's being "spirited away," they are only his fears, and "if it was at the rate he makes it, there would be a necessity of a Guard in town, for safety." Still, he knows that Mr. Smith has a warm heart which may justify his well-meaning and honest intentions. Sir John inclines to Utrecht rather than Oxford, and Sir Edward will agree to that, if necessary, but admits he prefers Oxford, only let some place be decided on, and that quickly. Mr. Wilkins is in need of more money, though why his Cosen's Expenses should be so great, seeing that he is at no charge for his diet, nor his horses, is more than Sir Edward comprehends. Would it be as well to join someone else with Mr. Wilkins when Tom goes abroad? Tom grows wonderfully tall, and has a spirit and understanding (if they have a happy bent) to make him an "accomplisht Gentleman."

What a topic for the Holkham firesides these winter evenings! The heir to £10,000 a year—for under Mr. Smith's management the rents will presently reach that amount—going abroad? Of course, all the villains on the Continent have their eye on Mr. Coke, and if he is not murdered, he will be robbed or kidnapped.

Nor were Mr. Smith's fears unnatural. After a twenty years' war, of course the Continent would be unsettled, and bands of marauders be going about. That Sir Edward thought well to consult the Duke about it goes some way to justify the good Humphrey's fears.

And what an insight into character has this wise old bachelor, Sir Edward! Already he discerns the possibility of his cousin making a wreck of his life, and trembles for the making or marring of what might be a fine character.

During the winter and spring of 1711-12 it is finally decided that the heir shall go abroad—not to Utrecht however, but first he shall make a tour in his own country. On June 19, Mr. Wilkins writes from Cambridge, his pupil being still in London, whither he has gone from Longford in February, that he is expecting horses out of the North every day, and designs that he and Mr. Coke shall tour the Midlands, then go to Durham and Scotland, then the West of England, and so to France or Holland.

Poor Mr. Wilkins! he does not know that other arrangements are already making, for the guardians evidently consider that he has not quite that "sound judgment and admirable address" which is to be desired in a governor. They have heard of a Dr. Hobart who seems the very man they want, and while Mr. Wilkins was inditing his hopeful epistle, Sir Edward was enquiring into the doctor's character and credentials. The Bishop of Chester vouches for him, and he is at once engaged for three years.

Thomas Hobart took the degree of Doctor of Medicine at Cambridge, in 1700, and became a Fellow of Christ's College. The College books show that he had leave to go abroad on several occasions before he had leave "to be away from England for 3 years to go along with Mr. Cook, the Duke of Leeds' Grandson."

He appears to have been a learned and cultivated man, and he was engaged at a salary of £100 a year for his life, the very same income which about this time Mr. Fenton recommended to Mr. Gay as one which would ensure him "a clean shirt and a shoulder of mutton every day of his life." He enjoyed this income, however, only ten years after his parting with his pupil, for he died in 1728.

To have a doctor of medicine who was also a scholar and a man of character was, no doubt, a great advantage. Mr. Wilkins, let us hope, had a handsome present given him over and above his salary of £200 a year, to compensate for his sudden dismissal and disappointment.

Tom's departure for France is settled for the middle of August, 1712; but before he goes, he pays a visit to Holkham and to his grandmother, Lady Ann, at Beckhall.

"HOLKHAM,
"*July* 27, 1712.

"HON. SIR,

"I am ashamed of my not writing to you Sooner, my Lady Ann haveing so much company continually at Beckhall, I hope you'll excuse me—I ordered Mr. Smith to give you an account of my journey, which I should have done, had I not been prevented by my illness, but I am now perfectly recovered. . . . On Wednesday I sent you a Buck of my own killing, and I hope it will come sweet to your hands for I think it an excellent fatt one. Yesterday I left Beckhall and my Lady Ann violently in tears, who was sent for post to Eason where my Ld. Duke of Leeds lyes dying or dead, so I suppose I must go into mourning, tho' I havn't heard yet whether he is dead or no, but my Lady promised to write.

"Hond. Sir, Yr. most dutifull Grandson, and humble servt.

"T. COKE."

The letter which Humphrey Smith was "ordered" to send lets us know that the illness was no more than a "fitt of the cholick"—probably indigestion—and that his master soon recovered.

That famous statesman the Duke of Leeds died on July 26, and Tom escaped from Beckhall just in time, "not liking such a grave place as I knew this would be at that time." But he returns presently, finds Lady Ann "beginning to grow a little merrier," and wishes her good-bye.

He spent a fortnight in the old Manor House at Holkham, and left £5 for Mr. Smith's kindly servants who had ministered to his comfort—an unusual amount even in those days of super-generous "vails."

But the young man's heart must have glowed with pride and affection at the warmth of his reception. School was very well, Longford had been better, but Holkham was home—these were his people.

Bells ring, as he passes, from every village steeple that boasts a peal, and the village poor are comforted in return. Swaffham, Tittleshall, Wighton, Billingford, Wells, Holkham, make festival. "Several shipps that fired their Guns" are substantially rewarded, as are the "Wells men that came with drums and firearms to salute Mr. Coke."

So, in this blaze of simple glory and love, the heir bids adieu to his thronging, affectionate people, to a very different Holkham from that which he was one day to create. And now good-bye to Norfolk. Crack your whips, Coachmen! Spread your sails, Mariners! Mr. Coke sets out beyond sea!

CHAPTER XXI

THOMAS COKE—FOREIGN TRAVEL

IN good Queen Anne's day, rank was rank, and wealth was wealth, and those who owned these blessings were expected to live up to them. What the Elizabethan age called "grace of congruity" was still a rule which the Cokes and the Newtons were not inclined to call in question.

Old Lady Newton hoped that Cary would be allowed to bury her grandmother, Lady Mary Heveningham, "according to her quality"; and the guardians saw to it that the heir should travel in a manner suitable to his quality, though without undue ostentation or parade. He must have a governor to take entire charge, and a tutor to carry on elementary teaching, and both he and they require servants. Everyone who could afford it took coach and horses, and no doubt Thomas found pleasure, as young John Ruskin did, in the inspection and purchase of the coach. They took only four horses, for when six or even eight should be required for bad roads and hilly country, more could be hired. When Sir Walter Scott met Lord Abercorn travelling to Scotland in five carriages, himself riding behind with his Garter riband on, he smiled at such splendour. He would have found nothing out of the common in Mr. Coke's equipage. Two grooms, William and John, started with the party, but William soon returned to England, his place being taken by a Frenchman, Jean Baptiste. Mr. Coke's valet Abraham, and a superior servant, Edward Jarrett, who paid the travelling bills and kept the accounts, completed the retinue. Mr. Humphrey Smith and his son Edward went as far as Dunkirk to see that all was in orderly train, and then returned to report to Sir John. Five days were the travellers detained at Dover, waiting for a fair wind; but once across the water, they spend three weeks at Calais and Dunkirk, not reaching Paris till September 24. There they stay six weeks, and then go to Angers, where they settle into lodgings for six months. Tom is entered at the Academy, and is soon hard at work, having lessons in riding, fencing, dancing, music, as well as the classics and civil law.

He does not like Angers, and lets Sir John know it:

"*Jan.* 28, 1713.

"HOND. SIR.

"I received the letter you were pleased to honour me with, and begg pardon for having thus long delayed answering it, but I could bring many good excuses, if any could excuse such neglect, one of which is that I am quite taken up with my masters all day long, so that I have not a minute's time except on Sunday, and I make as much hast as I can with my studies, in hopes to leave this place when I am pretty well advanced in them, and to finish them at Paris, which I fancy is a much better place for the finishing, the Masters here not being the best in France; as to the language, I can here as well there, run into other company besides the French, there being Sir Strensham Master's son, who was formerly my schoolfellow, and I hear that in a short time they expect several other Englishmen; and this town affords me no other diversions than keeping them company, at the Academy we allways meet; and Doctor Hobart and Mr. Ferare always speak English to me, because they, not being able to pronounce French, think, if they spoke it to me, that it would alter my pronounciation. The inhabitants of this town speak very bad French. The air of this town is abominable, and so Doctor Hobart thinks, it is allways having a great fogg, which is occasioned by its being situated on two or three rivers: but nevertheless I find myself very well. I am sorry to hear Duke Hamilton's death is an hindrance to the rent of the house. I hear my lord Carmarthen and my lady Betty Harley are married. I wish he may have better success in marrying a Treasurer's daughter than my Grandfather Coke had . . . owing to the great rains, Corn is very scarce, and they say in some places they have now a famine. I begg you would give me leave to call myself

"Hond. Sir, Your most dutifull Grandson, & humble servt.

"T. COKE."

The news of Lord Carmarthen's marriage was true, but whether Lady Betty became as unpopular a grandmother as Lady Ann, I do not know.

The guardians were resolved against Paris, and, indeed, Tom's next gossip about it was not encouraging.

"*March* 12, 1713.
"ANGERS.

" . . . Mr. Mansell who arrived here last Tuesday from Paris, tells me there are a very great number of English. This town also begins to fill mightily with strangers. I am very sorry to hear you have been ill, but I hope it is nothing of what you apprehended of stone in the

Kidneys. I condole with you upon the loss of so good a Doctor as Doctor Ratcliffe, who, I hear, has left a very Noble Legacy to the University of Christchurch, tho' I heard no other particulars of his Will."

This report of Dr. Radcliffe's death was premature, for that excellent man did not die till November 1, 1714. Tom's confusion of Christchurch with the University may be forgiven. It is to be hoped he visited Oxford after the dome of the Radcliffe Camera had for ever immortalised his old doctor's fame.

The letter proceeds:

"I hear the French embassador[1] makes a very great show in England, but the French here complain of the Duke of Shrewsbury's[2] way of living, for they say he goes to bed too soon, and that he does not give publick entertainments enough; he was a little omissive on the Queen's Birthday, for all the English att Paris went to give him joy of it, and they expected a ball, as it was given out in the newspapers, but Mr. Mansell, who was there, tells me that the Duke deceived them, and lett them go away without one dance."

In another letter our young gentleman shows himself in training to become a wit and a "quiz":

"I hope the Lady's will be as much in love with the Ambassador as they were formerly with Prince Eugene; I am sorry he did not carry French wooden shoes with him instead of turnopes,[3] I fancy if he had wooden shoes with him that on my return I should have seen all the Court in them; but since the poor Lady's are deprived of that happiness, I don't doubt but that they will be proud to wear a turnope in their bosom instead of an orange. I fear he has a design against our parliament, for I hear he will serve them as they do tinkers at an Election, only he will make them drunk with wine instead of ale; for they report he has carryed over 10,000 bottles of Champagne, besides other wines. 'Tis thought this Embassy, without some little assistance from Vir immortalis as the French King has been pleased to stile himself, will quite ruin him, his estate being almost spent already.

"12 *February*, 1712/13."

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[1] Louis, Duc D'Aumont, arrived on January 19, 1712-13, and left London on November 18, 1713.

[2] Charles Talbot, twelfth Earl and only Duke of Shrewsbury (1660-1718), statesman. Tom's gossip is curious, for the Duke was celebrated for his courtesy—William III. called him "The King of Hearts."

[3] Turnips were introduced into English farming about this time, especially at Rainham, where Charles, second Lord Townshend, thought much of them.

A very long letter from Dr. Hobart, in April, praises Mr. Coke highly; he has pursued his studies with very great application and success, but so many Englishmen and Scotch are coming, that he may be tempted to relax his efforts. The reasons which led the guardians to exclude Paris now apply to Angers, and a move is desirable, for besides there being little good company, and much that is bad and profligate, it can never be prudent to suffer so young a man, of such a temper and fire, to contract habitudes by a long stay in one place. Mr. Coke says that hot weather does not suit him, so travelling, especially by the sea, will be best during the summer. They will carry their Latin authors with them, and civil law, with which Mr. Coke is more pleased than the doctor expected; he is already as much master of the French language as the doctor is, so far as conversation goes, and has made progress in Mathematicks. Dr. Hobart would like to go to the waters of Bourbon (he is subject to Colick), as the engagement with Mr. Coke prevented his cure at "the Bath" last year, and there is always the best company to be met with there. Mr. Jarrett's accounts are enclosed. The allowance has been exceeded, "yet when I look back, I don't see how we could have spent less." Everything is much dearer than it used to be, and the *pension* at Angers much higher, because of the exclusion of all others from the house. Mr. Mansell wished to join it, but took Dr. Hobart's refusal good humourdly. Every hunting-day is a great expense, about thirty livres; so many dogs have to be borrowed from so many gentleman, and there are so many huntsmen and attendants to be "tipped." Dr. Hobart had thought of selling the horses, only that they contribute so much to his pupil's diversion, which he is careful not to check him in, as it is innocent. On Thursday he is to hunt the wild boar with the Governor of Angers; and besides, the horses are useful when they go travelling. Mr. Ferrar presents his humble duty.

This gentleman, the tutor, is always spelt "Ferrari" in the account books, and Tom writes "Ferare," but he signs his name "D. Ferrari." He returned to England after a year's service as tutor, but reappeared in 1718, as tutor to Brother Neddy, and, in years to come, as librarian to Thomas Coke. An obituary notice in the *Gentleman's Magazine,* May, 1744, to which Mrs. Stirling has happily drawn attention, says that Ferrari was a Neapolitan, and practised as a lawyer " till by an accident he became acquainted with a learned man of Sir Thos. Coke's—now Lord Leicester's retinue: by whose means he renounced his practice and the Errors of the Church of Rome, and was appointed Librarian to the Noble Family where he died." It credits him with being an F.R.S.

Alas that the most interesting part of the magazine's story is but a journalist's romance! Ferrari may have been a Neapolitan by birth, but if he were converted to Protestantism by a pious retainer, it was certainly not by a retainer of Thomas Coke. The magazine further heard that, " On his body being opened, a large Stone, the size of a Turkey's egg, was extracted, and that he left a valuable Library to the Earl."

The distressing item about the stone may be true, and if the word " curious " be substituted for " valuable," the legacy was doubtless made. For there are a number of queer little old books at Holkham which bear the signature " D. Ferrari," and as the script is the same as that of a letter written by the tutor to Sir John Newton in 1718, it is clear that the tutor and the librarian were one and the same person. One or two expressions in the letter go to suggest that the writer was not an Englishmen, and few Englishmen ever wrote so exquisitely elegant and legible a hand. Perhaps he had been converted by some other nobleman's governor. He was certainly a scholar and a bibliophile; Monsieur Léon Dorez has noted various references to him and his learning in the correspondence of Continental scholars of the eighteenth century. Here we may leave Mr. Ferrari, or Ferrar, for the present.

In April, 1713, the party begins travelling in earnest; for the rest of the year they make no long stay at any place, though fencing and riding lessons are enjoyed whenever there is opportunity, and sight-seeing is agreeably diversified by the classics and the civil law.

By the help of Mr. Jarrett, his accounts, every step of the journeys, and the minutiæ of the daily expenses, can be followed.

Mr. Jarrett, however, cannot be forgiven for omitting the names of the books and pictures that were bought on the tour—information that would have been very valuable to bibliographers, and librarians, and writers upon Art. How well could we have spared his items such as "For letting Abraham's blood," "For britches for the 2 Johns," "For a coach glass that my master broke," for details of the purchase of manuscripts and early printed books at Dijon and Verona! Perhaps the coach glass was smashed when my master had lost his temper, and may thus be held to shed light on the character of the principal traveller, as "Given to too prety women, by my master's order" certainly does. But, on the other hand, no praise can be too high for the way in which Mr. Jarrett wrestled with the different coinages. On this article he deserves a chapter to himself.

Mr. Coke travels by water to Nantes and Bourdeaux, visits Toulouse (where they pick up some rare little Toulousain books, now at Holkham), Montpellier, Arles and Nismes—it is August when they are there, and it must have been desperately hot—Marseilles, and so to Aix, in September. Here they rest for ten days, the Riding School is made use of, and a master engaged for the flute. Dr. Hobart writes from Aix to explain why they had not remained at Toulouse, which Sir John had recommended. It was a place much to be liked for the obliging temper of the inhabitants, but the Academy and language were bad, and there was a mortality caused by an ill air left by the overflowing of the Garonne, and from want of bread. The Jesuits had shut up their schools. The doctor has given up the waters of Bourbon, and although the Academy of Aix consists only of three horses, that is better than nothing. They read some book of humanity, and go on with civil law. Wherever they have been, Mr. Coke has visited the Governors, Marshals of France, and Presidents of Parliaments, and been well received by them.

So to Avignon and Lyons, where they spend three weeks of October, enjoying a little hunting and rigging themselves out with new clothes for the winter, good great-coats, and liveries for three servants. The coach has been exchanged for two chaises, and at various places on the road countrymen have to be engaged to "help the chaises up hill." Mont Cenis is crossed on November 4, and there is this entry: "Paid to the Marons for carrying over Mt. Cenis to Susa." I suppose "Marons" were the men who carried the litters.

CHAPTER XXII

THOMAS COKE—"A PERFECT VIRTUOSO"

ON reaching Turin, Mr. Ferrari is given money wherewith to return to England; another interesting payment being 188 livres for a ton of Hermitage wine from Lyons. How good! We remember how Becky Sharp warmed Sir Pitt Crawley's cold blood with old Hermitage from Lord Steyne's cellars. A fortnight suffices for Turin, and they finish November at Genoa, where "Nineteen livres makes an old Louis d'or of France, or a Pistole of Spain." The calculation of strange moneys, sometimes with reference to old and sometimes to new louis d'ors, would tax the brains of a senior wrangler, but Mr. Jarrett surmounts all difficulties. Pisa, Lucca, a week at Florence, and a rapid journey over the Apennines, brings them to Venice, and it is with something of a sense of relief that we learn they rest there for a month, and have only a language and a mathematical master, otherwise enjoying themselves; for though "Télémaque, the first part of Titus Livius, and an Italien Grammar" are bought, Mr. Coke must keep up his French and his Latin, and learn Italian thoroughly. Since he came to love Livy, as will hereafter be shown, Mr. Jarrett did well to chronicle his first purchase of that author. But if he could be thus particular about Télémaque, why not about precious manuscripts?

They see all the sights that we go to see at Venice, and some that we do not—the Opera-Houses of St. John Chrysostom and St. Angelo, for instance; nor do we sup at Lady Baltimore's, nor go to frequent masquerades. We should travel to Rome by train or motor-car, but they take ship to Ravenna, and post thence viâ Rimini, Pesaro, Loretto, and Spoleto, staying to enjoy none of those enchanting places, and seeing nothing, apparently, except the church at Loreto and the waterfall near Terni. After all, with Rome at the end of the journey, there is some excuse for hurry. They reach the august city on February 7, 1714, and after two nights at the "Golden Mountain," settle comfortably into lodgings, where, with an interval of a fortnight, when they rush to Naples, they stay till June.

Thomas is now fifteen and a half, and this is the date of his entrance on the career of a virtuoso, especially as a student of architecture. In addition to all the necessary masters, he has a music master, ordering a "harpsicall" and buying a flute; and Signor Giacomo attends to teach him architecture and guide him to the beautiful buildings of the city, which he visits over and over again. He takes the study seriously, and buys "instruments to learn architecture." The Forum is never mentioned.

His picture-buying begins gently; he patronises some of the professors then working at Rome, but very few of his purchases of this period have survived. Certain pictures referable to these Roman visits were sold by the late Lord Leicester. Christian antiquity makes only a faint appeal. Such an entry as "Gave for 2 measures of the pillar our Saviour was tied to —2 pauls," is presently followed by "Paid for pictures, 850 pauls." (Thirty-three pauls equal a French louis d'or or a Spanish pistole.) Mr. Winter, "a Jarman," seems a favourite painter, and Mr. Alexander has "49 pauls for a picture of my master," but Bryan says Alexander was a bad painter, and ignores Winter, and Pasiccio, and Ignatius, who were favourites, too. A Diana, in miniature, and a copy from Pietro di Cortona by Ignatius are still at Holkham, and some years later he painted a portrait of Lady Margaret, Thomas Coke's wife, which she gave to one of her sisters, Lady Harold, afterwards Lady Gower. A "book of antique paintings, 90 pauls," looks as if Signor Bartoli, who at a later time did much work for Mr. Coke, were already employed. "Prints by Vandyke, 16 pauls," may be a book of Vandyke's etchings which has survived at Holkham. Altogether he spends about a hundred pounds on pictures and drawings, and where is the money for them to come from?

"To Sir John Newton.

"Rome,
"*May 24th, 1714.*

"Hond. Sir,

"I am very much ashamed of my neglect in not paying my duty to you sooner, but the unhappy news of your health made me fear to be troublesome. It was with a great deal of joy that I heard last post from my brother of your recovery . . . I am certain there was nobody more afflicted at your being ill than I, the fear of losing so good a father and so kind a friend could not but be of the greatest concern to me.

"I am become since my stay in Rome, a perfect virtuoso, and a great lover of pictures, even so far as to encroach on the kindness of my Guardians as to buy some few, I wrote to Sir Edward and Mr. Coke to desire a separate allowance for that purpose. . . . The heats begin to come on so fast, that obliges me to think of parting, after the famous procession of The Fête de Dieu which will be Thursday senight. I fancy I shall go to see the Congress of Peace between the French and the Emperour, and I shall not fail to write you all the politicks I can hear in those parts. . . .

"My duty to my Lady, and love to Mr. and Mrs. Newton; having grown the head taller than my Uncle, I begin to think that name is not fitting for him, and I also begg my love to my Sisters, Sir, etc.,

"T. Coke."

This gives the first suggestion that Sisters Cary and Anne were now living with their grandparents.

A week after the date of this letter, an important name makes its appearance in Mr. Jarrett's book: "Paid to Mr. Kent. 60 pauls." William Kent, afterwards the famous architect who drew the plans for the new palace at Holkman, exercised so profound an influence over the young man, that the date is of special interest. It is not stated for what the sixty pauls were due, but there are frequent entries of sums paid to Mr. Kent for drawings, so that they were perhaps for something of that sort. Two small paintings and a few of Kent's drawings survive at Holkham. Afterwards there is evidence that Mr. Coke helped Kent a good deal with money, and it is clear that from the first he regarded the young artist with singular respect, and an admiration which he never lost.

It is known that Mr. Coke and that other influential patron of Kent, Richard Boyle,[1] Earl of Burlington, were friends, but I can find no foundation for the legend that they were travelling companions during Mr. Coke's tour. Mr. Jarrett mentions him only once, though he is careful to name the persons whom Mr. Coke visited, and especially those few with whom he travelled. Such an entry as "Gave to my lord

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[1] Richard Boyle, third Earl of Burlington and fourth Earl of Cork (1695-1753), virtuoso, amateur architect, and patron of architects, artists and men of letters. Kent lived in his house.

Burlington's servants" would inevitably have appeared over and over again, had the two friends seen much of each other in Italy. It seemed impossible to pay a call without leaving a "vail" for the domestics.

Kent was at this time studying painting under Cavaliere Luti,[1] to whose teaching he did little credit. But Mr. Coke knew Luti well enough to make him presents of plate, and it is not improbable that he made Kent's acquaintance through Luti.

The five busy months at Rome over, the young virtuoso goes to Florence for three weeks. Here, very possibly, he laid the foundation of his friendship with the Florentine librarians which was later to be so fruitful. But the passion for manuscripts and fine books had not yet begun to stir his soul. It is curious that it should have been stated that he stayed at Florence longer than at any other place, even making it his "*quartier-général.*" He was there again in 1716, staying between two and three months, and in 1717 for seventeen days; whereas he spent five months in Rome in 1714, and four months both in 1716 and 1717. Now he returns to Venice for August, visiting by the way Bologna (where he buys a picture by Albano), Forli, the republic of San Marino, Ravenna, and Padua.

Kent is at Venice (pictures are bought from him for twenty-one louis d'or), and Mr. Coke sits to Signorina Carrera, known as "Rosalba," for his portrait, paying her 217 livres or about six and a half louis d'or. Kent goes with his patron for a week to Padua, and then they separate, Mr. Coke giving him 214 livres to bear his expense to Parma. So little was doing at Venice, according to Mr. Jarrett, that we are not surprised to learn that Mr. Coke had been ill, though there is nothing said about a doctor. He tells Sir John that a "feaver had kept him in bed for a fortnight," and proceeds to discuss a projected stay at Turin.

> "The Queen's[2] death will make many people grumble, the Duke of Savoy won't care to acknowledge our new King, as he loses all his hopes; . . . The state of politics will make many of the English return home, and prevent others coming out. Mr. Macartney passed

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[1] Benedetti Luti (1666-1724), pupil of Ciro Ferri. A painter of considerable charm.

[2] Queen Anne.

by here this day, and is gone to Venice; he did me the honour of a visit, having seen him at Rome; he intends for England in a short time; he conceals his name, and passes among foreigners for a German. They talk of a very fine show at Parma for the marriage of the Princess. . . . I must try to give my judgment of the King of Spain's choice.

"Most hond. Sir, etc.

"T. Coke."

Was this the Macartney who was Lord Mohun's second in the duel which killed Duke Hamilton? It looks rather like it. He was known to have fled abroad, and the concealment of name is suspicious.

October passes at Vicenza—city of Palladio, which must have set Master Thomas dreaming of the palace he might one day build; Verona, where they visit Signor Giusti's garden, and certainly saw the great cypresses, some scions of the greatest of which are growing at Holkham at this day planted, however, in modern times; Brescia, Bergamo, and Mantua. Six weeks are spent visiting Reggio, Modena, Parma—but though they see the Duke's palace, nothing is said about the Princess, and the most expensive pleasure they had, was "Seeing the Machine for working Silke." Then they go to Piacenza, Cremona, Milan, Pavia, and so to Turin, which they reach on December 3. There have been slight indications that an interest in books is developing: a few are paid for, and all the libraries have been visited and their influence deeply felt. The Duke of Savoy is not inimical to the English; Thomas presents himself at Court, and Dr. Hobart arranges for a stay of four months at Turin.

At first the prospect of entering the Academy was sufficiently alarming to a virtuoso now seventeen years old.

"Turin,
"*Jany. 3rd,* 17$\frac{15}{14}$.

"Most Hond. Sir.

"I have so long neglected paying my duty to you that I can't tell how to make any excuse, and my only hope to obtain a pardon is by being recken'd as a rattle that does not give myself time enough to pay my duty to so good a Grandfather and intire a friend as you. . . . I did intend to have desired you to defend me from being whip'd in this Academy, for I heard a very ill character of it, but I, having a Governour, am obliged to no rules, so I am very contented to stay, for I divert myself extreamly morning and night at Court or in Assemblys, and I like the company very much. I am sure you would not desire that I should be treated like a child, as the Piemontese are in this

Academy. . . . I think of all the Academys that I have seen, except at Rome and Naples, this is the worst, I have so very bad an opinion of the manner of riding, that I shan't much mind the master's instructions. The fencing master is excellent, and the only one that is tolerable here. During my voiage round Italy, I have bought several of the most valuable authors that have writ in Italian or about the Country . . . if I missed the occasion of buying books, I should not be able to find severall of the best of them, and its impossible to buy them to my mind, unless I myself am present, and certainly one of the greatest ornaments to a Gentleman or his family is a fine Library.

"I hear Ld. Peterborough is expected every day . . . here is at present one Mr. Oglethorpe, of whom I can make nothing at all, for he is one day Envoy, and the next not, but he is a very goodnatur'd man. I seldom read the newspapers, but when I do, I generally find some new Lords. I see this Gentleman [he meant George I.] won't be behind with the late Queen. I doubt there are several of the Lords who don't care for Court, so he's bin in the right to make new ones, that his Court may be splendid.

"Sir Henry Furnace who, I hear, is also to have that title, will be one of the chiefest ornaments of the new Court, but I fear some of the German Counts or Barons will not much care to give place to him, when they know his noble extraction. I have no news or politicks to tell you from hence, for the people here have not the liberty that we have of speaking their mind, tho' they know so much of foreign countrys, that there is not a maid of honour or a Nun but will ask an Englishman if he is a Whigg or a Tory; we have made ourselves ridiculous, I think, in all parts by those names. . . .

"... T. Coke."

When the party settles for some time in a city, two footmen of the country are engaged, and two chairmen for whose use black coats are "hired from the Jues." I believe that a traffic of this sort is still the monopoly of that ancient race. A more dubious practice was the hiring of blankets. Was it some germ carried in their wool that laid low my master and Mr. Jarrett, and John Cox the faithful English groom? They are all ill; much asses' milk is ordered, and the aid of "2 physitians"—the King's and Lord Burlington's—is invoked. Perhaps it was the water they drank, and the physicians suspected it, for our old friend "Nocera" water now makes an appearance in the accounts. Thomas appears to have suffered least, for there are no long intervals in his attendance at that very inferior academy; the tennis court, the opera, and the rope-dancing fill up his time; and he makes a jaunt to Milan in company with Mr. Oglethorpe.

By April they have had enough of Turin, and go up the mountains to Chambéry, to which pleasant town they give three months, lodging in the house of Madame Rousset, who treats them so well, that, on their departure, they make her an unusually handsome present "for her kind yousage of us." Spring in Savoy is generally pleasant; we hear of fishing in Lac Bourget, dinners at Aix and suppers in gardens, and they explore to the Grande Chartreuse. My master has private lessons in geography and mathematics and civil law and music, and goes on with architecture.

They drink a little Hermitage, but rely chiefly on a chest of "Rosoli" brought from Turin—let us hope it was more palatable than that detestable beverage which Mrs. Hoggarty (of the diamond) called "Rosolio," to the prejudice of her nephew. Thomas rightly judged a fine library to be a great ornament for a gentleman's house, and he did not forget that other ornament—a fine cellar, for he had shipped to England a hogshead of Bordeaux wine, and a "Dimy Queue" of Burgundy—whatever that measure may be. It cost 300 livres, as did the hogshead, or thirty louis d'or.

In the middle of July our friends are at Geneva, and Lausanne, where Thomas finds time to beg Sir John Newton's pardon for his delay in writing, and to congratulate him on a complete restoration to health. Sir John has retired to the country, to his embellished seat of Culverthorpe in Lincolnshire, and his grandson thinks that—

> "Such a retirement must be at present doubly agreeable, since according to the news we hear all good company and conversation are entirely lost in England by the great inveterateness of the parties. . . .
>
> "I desired leave of Sir Edward and Mr. John Coke to make a little tour in Germany, I dared not at that time be troublesome to you. But there is no undertaking that journey by reason of the quarentines . . . wherefore I must content myself with voiaging a little round Switzerland, and shall, if you think fitt, pass one more winter in Italy, to confirm myself in the language and the virtuosoship of that Country. . . . I passed one week at Geneve where I met my Lord Essex[1] and several other English gentlemen. My cozin Mr. L'Estrange[2] and Mr. Warner[3] of Norfolk are with me, and we intend to travel to Switzerland

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[1] William, third Earl, great-grandson of Mrs. Sadleir's great friend, Arthur, Lord Capell, and his wife (see *ante,* p. 58).

[2] A very distant cousin. John Coke's eighth daughter, Maria, had married Sir Nicholas L'Estrange.

[3] Mr. Lee Warner, of Walsingham (see p. 257).

together. . . . The King of Sicily is at Thonon near Geneve, which occasioned some small frights to that Republick, who doubled their guards: they are constantly sending deputations to His Majesty, but I don't know about what. 'Tis thought he will pass a fortnight at Chambery before his return to Turin, tho' the Queen and Prince won't undertake that journey by reason of the small pox which is in very great number there. . . ."

In August they are in Basel, and here comes the first mention of "Embalage of a chest of books." The "Habits of Basel" and the "Death Dance of Holbein" are, alas! the only books specified, and these have vanished, but a shelf of early books from the press of Frobenius may probably be referred to this visit.

"August 21. Here begins the Jarmon account, fifteen Bats make a Guld, and 7 Gulds and 7 Bats and a halfe makes an Old Louis d'Or." In Mrs. Ewing's delightful story, Father Hedgehog ran a race with a hare (on opposite sides of the hedge) for a louis d'or and a bottle of brandy, and won it. Was the prize an old or a new louis d'or? Mr. Jarrett might have been able to tell us.

The journey is made by water to Frankfort; a Mr. Richard Monger joins them, and they see the Great Clock at Strasburg and the Great Tun at Heidelberg. At Mainz three boxes of books are packed. To Frankfort nearly three weeks are given, and there we read of a Greek master who buys books for the future library.

Returning to Mainz, Thomas, who always loved a play or a playbook, went to the Comedy every night for a week. At Treves they find master's old groom, Jean Baptiste, and give him charity; and at Thionville they relieve two English soldiers. They see Verdun, and the great church at Rheims and the holy oil, and despatch two boxes of books thence. At Langres they probably picked up the fine Missal according to the Use of Langres. Tom is now as eager in the hunt for beautiful books as Dr. Hobart could wish—for to his governor must be attributed the fostering of this delightful taste. Dijon supplies books; and at Lyons we tread sacred ground, for it was here, between November 8 and 19, 1715, that Mr. Coke made his first great *coup* as a collector of manuscripts, paying 3,000 livres for about forty manuscripts from the convent of the Augustins déchaussés de la Croix-Rousse. Monsieur Dorez supposed the purchase to have been made in 1713, but there is no question that November, 1715, saw the foundation-stone laid of that remarkable library of manuscripts which is one of the chief glories of Holkham.

Mr. Coke was generous enough to permit his governor to buy a few fine treasures for himself, and these eventually came into the possession of Lord Mostyn, and were sold at Sotheby's in 1920.

On November 2 they take the water to Avignon and on to Aix, where Tom gracefully remembers his riding-master. At Marseilles they stay fourteen days, getting ready for a voyage to Sicily; the chaises are mended for the twentieth time and put on board, together with turkey, and "pulletts," and beef and mutton, "turneps," earthenware, candles, and two chests of Côte-rôtie.

They do not leave the "Bons Enfans" Hotel until December 25, and the New Year, 1716, is in when they reach Palermo safely, though a surgeon has to be called, and paid for "what he did to my master's thye on ship's board."

CHAPTER XXIII

THOMAS COKE—BROTHERS, SISTERS, AND AN ELOPEMENT

We must leave Mr. Coke to enjoy the delights of Palermo for a while, and enquire what his brothers and sisters were doing in England. Unfortunately there is little known about Neddy and Bobby, except that Mr. Casey's house remained their headquarters until 1718.

Their elder brother, though far away, took a very kindly and generous interest in them. In a letter from Sicily, early in 1716, he hopes Sir John will not think him too presumptuous if he puts in a word concerning the education of his brothers:

> "I don't doubt forgiveness when you see that my forwardness in medling with what don't belong to me, and of which I am no kind of judge, only proceeds from the Great love I bear my brothers.
>
> "It is certain they are in extremely good hands, and that my family will always have great obligations to Mr. Casey for the great care he has of them, and it is to be wished, if they are removed, that Mr. Casey was able to be still with them. But would you not think it better that at their age [Neddy was 13, Bobby 12] they were to go rather to Isleworth, or some free school, than continue at London. Being lodged among so many of their young equals as in a School is a kind of introduction to liveing in the world, and will teach them how to shift for themselves in different companys. If perchance their Chancery allowance is not able to do it, if you'll permit me, I offer willingly to bear that charge. You will say it is extravagant to make such an offer, when I myself exceed my allowance, but I have taken care in a Will to indemnify my Guardians from all loss."

I think it would be difficult to beat that for its good sense and its brotherly feeling.

Another letter shows that Sir John provided a tutor, and the kind brother then says he is mighty desirous to pay the expense of a horse for them, "which would be of great advantage to their health, and form their body, and as I have been so long without giving them any money, its the least favour I can do for them." What an example he sets to all eldest brothers!

The offer to pay for the education need not have been accepted, for the guardians looked carefully after their wards' monetary interests, as appears from a statement of their fortunes drawn up in 1714. Neddy was well off for a second son. In addition to an annuity of £200 a year out of his elder brother's estate, he enjoyed the income of certain estates left him by his mother, which amounted to £668 a year. This maternal estate, however, was charged with the payment of £2,000 to Bobby when he should be twenty-five, and £500 apiece to Cary and Ann. The guardians had saved in seven years out of Neddy's estate no less than £2,100, so that by the time he had to pay off the charges, there would be enough and to spare. Bobby had his annuity of £200 a year, and his £2,000 when he should be twenty-five. And the guardians had saved £1,000 out of his annuity. So, though not rich, he would have something to "come and go on," as Mrs. Carlyle would say.

Cary and Ann, by their father's Will, were to have £5,000 at the age of eighteen, or on their wedding-day, and £250 a year for maintenance till either of those happy dates; and by their mother's Will £500. Out of their little property and maintenance money, £1,275 had been saved. Surely no children were ever luckier in the article of guardians. These "beauteous female remains of the deceased parents" were taken to live in Soho Square by their kind grandparents when they were thirteen or fourteen, but it is painful to relate that they did not add to the happiness of that home. For they quarrelled with each other, thus setting a sad example to their step-uncle and aunt, Mick and Sue. Sir John came to share the opinion of good Mrs. Turner:

> "'Such quarrelsome children,' their Mother replied,
> 'I find it much better all day to divide.
> Go stand in that corner,'" etc.;

and he thought he might find a suitable corner for Ann in that home of aristocratic but "watery" elegance, Beckhall.

It was not a very favourable moment for claiming Lady Ann's promise to take any of the children, "if it be but for a little while"; for during this year, 1714, the guardians had been firm in a dispute with Colonel Walpole, and Tom had communicated to Sir John the substance of a letter with which Lady Ann had favoured him.

She had begged him to intercede with the guardians not to raise the rent of Beckhall, saying that this would oblige her to leave that place, and give her a great deal of trouble. She tells Tom she may be forced to

> "spend that which was in her power, at her death, to give to my family, I suppose meaning the Jewel money, which she has very often promised Smith to give to my brothers and sisters. If there were any good reason to trust to that, I should be very sorry that my interest should make them any losers, but her Ladyship shows at present so very little concern for the interest of my family that I fancy we can have no great views from her at her death, wherefore, I, as civilly as possible, told her Ladyship the true esteem I had for her person, and that, if I was of age, I should be extremely willing to obey her, but I was sure her Ladyship would see that nature made me rather take the part of my brother than Mr. Walpole, and that I intended to give the surplus of the rent to my brother Edward who by Mr. Walpole's ill-usage of him, hath sufficiently paid even for the whole Manor."

Tom then says he will, of course, trust his guardians to do what is right in this matter.

Colonel Walpole pretended that he had got a lease of Beckhall for nothing out of Edward Coke when he was "merry in drink." But the guardians had from the first insisted on his paying proper rent, and now wished to raise it; and Colonel Walpole was obliged to agree, though with indignation, to pay the rent demanded.

Here is Sir John's letter to Lady Ann, about her taking her granddaughter, Ann the younger, to live with her.

> "London.
> "*Dec*^{br} 1714.
>
> "Madam,
>
> "Knowing yr. Ladyship to be very lonely, and my granddaughters not agreeing very well with each other, makes me think that being separated may increase their affections: soe that if yr. Ladyship will not think itt a trouble, I will send my Granddaughter Ann to you. . . . As a Guardian, your Ladyship must give me leave to pay for her and her maide's board, what yr. Ladyship shall think fitt. They have now a maide between them who shall stay with Cary: for the other who is to be in yr. Ladyship's family, I must beg you to take who you like to be about her. . . . Ever since their Mother Died, they have learnt to Dance, Musick, Writing, Accounts, and Work, soe that her being in Town will be of no advantage to her, and I believe yr. Ladyship's Wise Conduct and good Company will be of great improvement to her. . . ."

Lady Ann replies that she can imagine no place more suitable for her grandchildren than Sir John's house:

"I hope that my Granddaughter's disagreement is onely such as Young People will sometimes have, and not such as should make them forfeit the much greater happiness they would have in Continying with you. The good instructions which I doubt not you have given them of Obedience to God's Commands will Bee yr. best means of fixing theire affections to one Another. . . . You know, Sir, As I'm not mistress of myself, so I can Return no Answer to your Proposals from myself.

"Your Real Servant to command
"ANN WALPOLE."

This was stiff indeed, and shows that the raised rent still rankled.

I think we need not hear much more of Lady Ann. She buried her husband in 1717—disappointing longevity, for he had long ago promised to kill himself "with soe hard drinking" in three years—and survived him till 1722. She left £2,400 in legacies; £400 to Cary and Bobby; £500 to Ann; considerable bequests to various friends; ample sums to servants, including £50 to good old Mr. Longstrath; and named Mr. Coke executor, giving him the residue of her personal estate, about £1,700. She was buried "according to her quality," the funeral costing £200—the same sum which had been spent on her son Edward's funeral.

The two naughty girls went on living with Sir John during 1715; but relief was to come, though in a very mortifying way. A serpent, a beautiful young serpent, was abroad in Soho Square, seeking to devour Miss Ann, and with the help of a traitorous maid (perhaps the very Abigail who was not to go to Beckhall) the creature attained its desire. In December, Ann was found to have secretly eloped with young Phillip Roberts, whose parents lived next door, and had married him. He was a cornet in the Life Guards.

Lady Newton's anger was such that she would not allow the abandoned young woman's boxes to be sent after her.

"TO SIR JOHN NEWTON.

"*Dec^{br}. the 21st,* 1715.

"SIR.

"I hope when this comes to your hands, it will in some measure prevail with you to forgive the private manner I took in obtaining your Grand-daughter. I have since had an angry letter from my Father for acting in such a Business without his consent, and to tell me it might have been proposed on equal terms, and were it not for her sake, for the kind reguard she has shown for me, we had not had leave to come down to him.

"I could have got her cloaths to appear in, had I known my Lady would not have been so kind to have lett her had her own, and am Sorry she will be forced to appear in the country in them she has, where she'll have People of Fashion to wait upon her.

"I hope when you have considered and Judged of this Affair, you won't think it much to her Disadvantage, and don't doubt but everything will be entirely easy, if you yourself are so.

"Yr. most humble servt.

"PHILL: ROBERTS."

"*Wednesday night.*"

A fairly cool letter from a young spark to a man so distinguished as Sir John Newton, even though Master Phillip was himself an eldest son whose father was in Parliament, and his mother a Wenman, born both of noble and baronet blood.

The shocking news did not reach the head of the family till April, though Holkham heard of it immediately, and Humphrey Smith was ready with counsel. He is "heartily sorry to hear of Mrs. Ann's Imprudent marriage, and hopes Sir John will be tardy in paying her Fortune, to oblige 'em to make a Settlement."

Thomas Coke writes in distress and anger from Sicily:

"AUGUSTA,

"*Apr. 7th,* 1716.

"EVER HOND. SIR.

"On my arrival to this place about four hours ago, I met in a letter from my Aunt Newton the most unwelcome and surprising news of my Sister Ann's folly and miscarriage. She is certainly unworthy of any of her relations for the future ever looking upon or having anything to do with her . . . at least it is some consolation to find she is with a Gentleman, and I hope in an honourable family. I have a great deal of uneasiness till I know the circumstances of the gentleman, not that I shall ever be reconciled with her way of management, but it would be a pleasure to think that my sister is not allied to a man unworthy of her family. . . . The former esteem and love I had for her would make me wish she was tolerably well placed, not that I think of forgiving her, or doing anything for her after this treatment. However she finds herself, well or bad, I'll have nothing more to say to her."

He begs Sir John to see that the marriage was in proper form, and, if not, to have it solemnised again; and the kind brother, in spite of his anger, differs from Humphrey Smith

PHILLIP ROBERTS (D. 1779).

From a portrait in the possession of Major Reginald Coke.

ANNE COKE, WIFE TO PHILLIP ROBERTS (1699-1758).

From a portrait in the possession of Major Reginald Coke.

about withholding Ann's portion, recommending that matters may be as well patched up as can be by way of a settlement on Ann and her children.

He thinks Cary ought to be removed, though she is incapable of committing such an action, for he knows her good temper and virtue; "yet if her youth being seduced by an unforeseen passion and seconded by the intrigues of treacherous servants (which you have too fatal an experience that no care can withstand), she might also be seduced." If necessary, he will at once return to England, though he would be very sorry to interrupt his travels.

Tom's anger was not unnatural, but meanwhile calmer counsels had prevailed, and Ann and her Phillip were recognised; at first, perhaps, rather coldly, but it is to be hoped she was allowed to have her clothes. Mr. Gabriel Roberts, on his part, was still inclined to be stiff, for he was a gentleman of family who had married a Wenman. Sir John was quite ready to be relieved of responsibility about Cary, and had found a match for her with a gentleman whose family dated almost from the Deluge—at any rate, in an unbroken line of Knights since the Conquest. This was Marmaduke Wyvill, son and heir to Sir Marmaduke Wyvill, Baronet, of Constable Burton, Yorkshire. At first Thomas had been opposed to this alliance, Mr. Wyvill being represented to him as a gambler who had heavy debts. But he is reassured, and begs pardon for his doubts. He writes from Bologna in the autumn of 1716, to Sir John:

> ". . . . I return you my thanks for all you have done for my sister Ann, and that your good nature extended so far as even after so great a misbehaviour, not entirely to abandon her. . . . I am sure my family have infinite obligations to you for that. I am sorry the Governour won't be prevailed on to make greater settlements, and seek, if possible, reconciliation with her friends. For my part I have not wrote to her, and shall hardly be prevail'd upon to do so.
>
> "In a letter I wrote to my sister Coke from Bologna (as I also at present do) I assured her of my entire satisfaction in her consenting to the proposals of Mr. Wyvill. I am intirely obliged to you for disposing of her so well to a gentleman of the State, family and reputation which I hear of Mr. Wyvill. Forgive me if at first I made the least doubt, but in the first heat, the moment I received letters which adviced me against it and told me of debts, I wrote and begged all information might be made concerning it."

Good, virtuous, Cary was properly married, but lived only till 1732. She had no children, but had a beautiful old house to live in. It may be suspected that she had inherited her mother's fatal disease.

Here we may anticipate the future so far as to note that had Miss Ann not married Mr. Roberts, it is highly probable that there would be no Cokes in the direct line now, and they, of course, are only Cokes by their descent from Ann Roberts, whose son, Wenman, took the name of Coke, and succeeded to the estates. For Cary, and Brothers Neddy and Bobby, having no children, and Tom's children dying in his lifetime, an heir would have had to be looked for among the descendants of Arthur or John Coke's daughters.

Phillip and Ann seem to have lived at a village called Husborne Crawley, not far from Woburn in Bedfordshire. But they were buried at Hillesdon near Buckingham, where the wife of their son Wenman, Miss Chamberlayne, owned a considerable property. Ann died in 1758, and a marble tablet commemorates her "unfeigned piety, integrity of heart, and true charity," etc. Phillip survived till 1779. He was honoured by no memorial stone, though his grandson, Thomas William Coke, could certainly have afforded one.

Mr. Gabriel Roberts was spoken of as "The Governour" because he had been Governor of Fort William, Calcutta. He had no doubt "shaken the pagoda tree" to some advantage.

CHAPTER XXIV

THOMAS COKE—MARTIAL ARDOUR OF A VIRTUOSO

MR. COKE had proposed visiting all the famous towns of Sicily, but winds and waves hindered that design, and he stayed at Palermo for the month of January, 1716. He thought it a beautiful town (as indeed it is), and found "extreame good company of Sicilians and Piemontese, the former highly improved by the conversation of the latter." There were many diversions for him—the "wild-beasts a-fighting," and the opera-house. It seems that you had to take your own candles there, and pay for the "velvet furniture" every time you went. Thomas's love for music was clearly genuine, and he admired the chief singing woman, Signora Manfredi, so much, that he gave her a silver basin and a chocolate pot. The library at Holkham shows that he gathered a good store of curious books on Sicilian history and topography. But he had to pay duties to the Receivers of the Inquisition for his books.

In February he sailed in the *Neptune* galley for Messina, and stayed there a fortnight, though he found nothing but poverty, and the fine city almost deserted. The King had improved his country in several ways, but took no notice of trade, and rather ruined it by his great impositions.

> "The Sicilians are in great fear of the Turcs, and the King is now fortifying Siracuza and Augusta, and they say he will come himself in the spring with 4000 men. People have great apprehensions of the Turcs progress this year, and I have seen a letter from the Consul at Constantinople which says that there was never known to have been so great an army."

There are no inns in Sicily, but he is well lodged at the Consul's, and embarks presently for Malta, for "while things continue so troubled in England, one can't keep too far from it." A month passes in Malta; a week at Syracuse, where he goes up the Anapo; and at Augusta, *en route* for Catania, he is horrified by the letter which told him of Sister Ann's elopement. The journey is accomplished in the felucca in which they set out from Malta. They land at Giardini, and take horses to Taormina. Taking in provisions at Messina, they go on to Naples, seeing Amalfi and Capri on the way. It all sounds very pleasant.

Kent comes to see his patron, and commends to him the painter Solimena, from whom a picture is presently ordered. Then they spend the summer at Rome, where pictures are commissioned from Procaccini, Garzi, Conca, and Luti, and many views of cities and palaces from Van Vitel, otherwise known as Occhiali, and these hang on the walls of Holkham today. For a book of drawings attributed to Raphael Mr. Coke gives fifty crowns; Passavant thought that a good many of them—they are mostly architectural studies—were really by Raphael. Signor Giacomo is still the architecture master, and takes his pupil to see Vignola's wonderful palace of Caprarola. Another artist whose name occurs several times is that of Signor Studio, otherwise Heinrich Van Lint, to whose influence Thomas's love for the pictures of Claude Lorraine may be owing. Tom had commissioned many drawings of statues and busts; now he begins to buy marbles. A bust of Lucius Verus, and a bas-relief, sixty crowns, are his first recorded possessions in this department of virtuosity.

In September they journey to Florence, and Kent follows them, bringing drawings. But books are the chief interest, and we now hear of an edition of Livy which this young classical scholar is talking of. Fairly large sums are paid to certain agents, Signori Bianchi and Mingolfi, relating to the Livy. The remainder of the year is spent in moving about among several interesting and neighbouring towns, such as Parma, Modena, Reggio, Piacenza. The hunt for books goes on merrily, and Kent keeps up the interest in pictures and drawings. Kent is ill at Modena, November 12, and Dr. Pimazzini attends him, at Mr. Coke's charges.

The year 1717 finds Mr. Coke at Bologna, but he soon starts for Rome, and during the four months that he stays there many pictures and statues are bought; the sums expended seem prodigious, nearly four thousand crowns: at this time Mr. Coke's portrait was painted by Trevisani.

The "Great Statue," a colossal figure called Jupiter, but now said to be Æsculapius, caused some trouble; two carts took it to Civita Vecchia, and they stuck fast in the snow. Signor Bartoli, besides executing a vast number of drawings, procures licences from the Government to send away four boxes of statues, and several pictures. There is nothing in Mr. Jarrett's books to throw light on the legend derived from Matthew Brettingham[1] the younger that Mr. Coke was arrested and imprisoned for conveying a statue of Diana secretly out of Rome, though he chronicles payment made for the journey of the goddess from Rome to Florence, and to one Luigi Corsi "for the head of Diana," and "marble sent to Florence" for the head. Brettingham attributes the head to Cavaceppi. Who is right—Brettingham or Mr. Jarrett?

What is more certain than the identity of the sculptor of Diana's head is that during the stay at Florence in May, Signor Biscioni, the famous Prefect of the Laurentian Library, comes much into view, commissioned to collate the text of the three Decades of Livy with manuscripts at Florence. Assisted by young and able scholars, Biscioni undertook to collate the text given by Paulus Minutius in 1565 with twenty-six manuscripts in the Laurentian Library and those of St. Mark and Corsini, and did not finish this monumental labour until 1728.[2] Biscioni furnished Mr. Coke and Dr. Hobart with warm recommendations to his learned friend Apostolo Zeno, at Venice. Monsieur Léon Dorez[3] recounts the cold reception of Biscioni's letter. Zeno, who was librarian to Bernardo Trevisano, replied that he had not yet seen Mr. Coke, who would no doubt find something in the way of manuscripts at Venice, "though the city had already been despoiled of so many by an infinity of northern strangers."

But he must have seen Mr. Coke, and to his cost; for several of Trevisano's fine books were carried off by this northern stranger. How deeply one sympathises with poor Zeno when he saw his beloved manuscripts disappearing into the custody of a rich youth from England; and how he must have hated Trevisano's secretary, who received a gratuity of twenty-two livres for a present of books—unless, indeed, secretary and librarian were one and the same person.

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[1] For Brettingham, see p. 286.

[2] Mrs. Stirling rightly gives 1721 as the year when Biscioni sent some part of the work, with a Latin letter to Mr. Coke; but there was more to come, and the last instalment is dated 1728.

[3] "Communication à l'Académie des Inscriptions sur la Collection de MSS. de Lord Leicester" (1906).

And another triumph for the manuscript-hunters was at hand.

Dr. Hobart, with a Mr. West and Signor Domenico Vincentini, went to Padua to the famous library of the Convent of S. Giovanni in Verdara, and Mr. Coke spends two days there shortly after. I suspect that the fine manuscripts which he bought there had been first examined by Dr. Hobart, and that they actually changed owners on June 10 or 11.

His purchases at Venice came to about sixty pounds—lucky man to get such books for so little—and he thought himself at liberty to order Holland lace and two suits of clothes which cost nearly six thousand livres. This seems a large tailor's bill, but Mr. Coke is bound for Vienna, where he will be seen at the Court of the Emperor, so of course he must look his best, for the honour of England.

Travelling viâ Trent, where they see the church where the Council was held (the autograph manuscript of Sarpi's[1] History of that Council was one of Mr. Coke's *trouvailles*); by Innspruck and Linz, they descend the Danube to within a post and a half of Vienna. Complete enjoyment of that gayest of cities was marred by a terrible disappointment. A campaign was then going on under the walls of Belgrade, and Mr. Coke, fine fellow, was eager to share in experience of war. He made elaborate preparations: horses and tents and plans and baggage were bought, servants engaged—it all came to 2,647 florins—and then Dr. Hobart put down his foot, and destroyed the delightful vision of warlike glory. How detestable, yet, under the circumstances, how wise of Dr. Hobart! Indeed, he could not have acted otherwise, for Sir Edward Coke, hearing of the project, had already forbidden it. Poor Thomas retired to Prague, but finding no company there, went on to Dresden, having written a manly apology to Sir John Newton for his contemplated disobedience.

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[1] Paolo Sarpi (1552-1622), celebrated Venetian canonist, statesman and historian. His monumental "History of the Council of Trent," was first published in London, 1619.

"PRAG.
"*August* 11, 1717.

" . . . I beg ten thousand pardons for what you may by this time be informed of, of my intention to see the army in Hungary, notwithstanding Sir Edward Coke, in the name of my Guardians, had refused.

"I assure you what I did was not with any intention to disoblige you, or want of deference to the orders of such good friends, but only, having on so many occasions proved your great kindness, I thought you might be unwilling to lett me expose myself at a Campagne, tho' it would have been of such advantage and satisfaction to me; also considering that if I miss this, I might perhaps never have another occasion, made me resolve to go, wherefore I prepared all necessities, but Mr. Hobart (who in deference to my Guardians I forgive, they having recommended him,) got the Governor of Austria to put me in arrest, the night before my departure, so I was obliged to stay, but had thrown away a pretty deal of money on my preparations. I beg ten thousand pardons for having so undertaken any design contrary to the advice of my Guardians, but I hope the circumstances will gain pardon for this. . . . Vienna is a very dull place. I had acquaintance enough, and if German Conversation could be agreeable I should have diverted myself there, but the number of foreign ministers is some *soulagement,* after the fatigue of a German conversation. It is very easy to guess at their manners, enough to see one book, and the ugly Gothick letter they make use of. So is their language, breeding, dress etc. I thank God I am half out of it. . . . Before I left Vienna, I hear Prince Eugene[1] was gone out of the lines to meet the Turc and give battle. The last news brought was the enemy was 2 days march, so they expected the battle would be given the 1st or 2nd of August. The Turc has 200,000 men, and they fear much at Vienna, the Event.

"The German infantry, the last Campagne, but especially at some attacks and skirmishes this present, behaved itself so very ill, there is no counting upon it. Cæsar[2] leaves all that to Prince Eugene, and diverts himself every afternoon by shooting at a white mark, which he has also made the Empress and the Ladys of the Court use themselves to. He will stay to defend Vienna, and if the Turc overcomes his men in Hungary, Cæsar with the She army of his own dressing, will try fortune with him at Vienna. I can't call these Ladys Amazons, one must find a new name, for they, instead of one breast being cut off, have two as big as four other women can have. The sexes are so changed at Vienna, that as the Ladys shoot, the men are obliged to make curses [curtsies?]. . . ."

Vienna from this description, must have been more like the Berlin of to-day, except in the article of military excellence. But after the blow fell about his campaign, Thomas naturally viewed everything *en noir*. One can scarcely praise him too highly for his recovery from the great disappointment to his hopes. How good-temperedly he writes! and forgives even Dr. Hobart. No black dogs were allowed to settle on his back for long.

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[1] Prince Eugene signally defeated the Turks, taking Temesvar which had been 164 years in their hands, and also Belgrade. Peace was then made.

[2] Emperor Charles VI. (1685-1740).

Dresden seems to have pleased him, and he played at tennis there. At Berlin he bought valuable manuscripts from the library of Andreas Erasmus Seidel, among them two precious illuminated Byzantine Gospels. Dr. Hobart spent five weeks at the waters of Pyrmont, while his pupil saw Hanover, Amsterdam, and The Hague. Perhaps a separation was just as well. November passes at The Hague, where he makes friends with Lord Leslie and his brother, and travels with them to Antwerp, and so to Brussels. Here they are joined by Lord Ailesbury, and so, for the New Year, to Paris. For books bought in Germany, the bill is 200 florins, for those in Holland and Flanders, 1,000 guilders, but the rare Seidel manuscripts were paid for later.

No embargo could be placed upon Paris for a man shortly to be of full age, and though Mr. Coke still rides at the Academy, and has his different masters, he leads a different kind of life from that of five and a half years ago. He lives in comfortable lodgings and has four men in livery. His old groom, Jean Baptiste, turns up, and is taken again into service. We read of books bought, of many masquerades, of meetings with Lords Essex and Stair, of presents of flowers sent by the King's gardener, recalling the presents of fruit sent by Queen Elizabeth's gardener to his ancestor, the Chief Justice. Pictures, too, are collected, chief among them a large equestrian portrait of Albert Duc d'Arenburg and Prince de Barbançon, by Vandyke, which now hangs at Holkham. This cost 4,500 livres, perhaps £200. Then there was a pleasant meeting with Brother Neddy, who, after the example of Thomas, was to study abroad and receive the polish that foreign Courts were held to give. Mr. Ferrari was with him as tutor.

In his first letter from Paris, Thomas excuses himself at great length to Sir John for his customary delay in writing, but says the shortness of his stay in Paris made him apply with double application to his exercises. Brother Neddy cannot speak the language as yet, which prevents his being introduced to the best Parisian circles; however, he is to go to Lorraine, and Tom will take care that the Duke pays him attention. But Mr. Ferrari is ill, and ought not to travel. What can be done? Perhaps Dr. Hobart could attend Neddy until Mr. Ferrari is able to resume his duties? The letter concludes with a discussion of Mr. Roberts's ill-conduct in failing to carry out his promises about Sister Ann's settlements. Mr. Lamb, the lawyer, has been desired to assure him that the head of the family will not visit his sister until her father-in-law has made his word good.

Neddy, now fourteen, was finding Paris dull. His letters to Sir John are innocent productions:

> "This being the fair of St. Germains, there are many divertions, but they are all very insipit to me yet, till I can speak the language it is impossible for me to have any pleasure . . . I have already begun to ride, and think it a very pleasant exercise. Dr. Hobart has got a Latin Master for me, whilst Mr. Ferari comes, so that when I go into the Academy or a Pension, I shall be employed all the day till six or seven o'clock. I beg you'll excuse the blots."

When Brother Tom is setting out for England, Neddy is unhappy:

> "I am under a great concern for my Brother's departure, that we should after this small stay together be parted for almost as long as we have been. I am just going for Lorrain . . . I hear that the Masters there are very good, and the Duke extremely civil to strangers, and especially Englishmen. I have not time to write longer at present, for the horses wait for me at the door."

In the autumn Neddy writes cheerfully from Luneville:

> "I am very well satisfied with the Academy and the Civilitys I have met with from the Duke, who often invites me to dine with him, and sometimes makes me partaker of his Diversion of Hunting. Every day I learn double exercises, for whereas others ride but three horses, I ride four, and fence and dance twice, and Learn Mathematics, french, and to play on the Flute, besides what I read with Mr. Ferrari, which takes me up till six o'clock, after which I generally go to Court."

Mr. Ferrari about this time sends a very good report of Neddy; he performs his exercises with great appreciation, and in due time will be a fine, accomplished gentleman. The Duke shows a particular regard for him.

No doubt he was a charming boy. I wish we knew more of him. He never married, and died in 1731. The early deaths of Neddy and his sister Cary, Lady Wyvill, make it seem probable that they had inherited the fatal consumption which had carried off their mother.

Mr. Coke does not relax his pursuit of beautiful books and fine pictures, even amid the distractions of Paris. Several boxes of books are sent away. At the same time two berlines are bought for 3,078 livres, and Jean Baptiste sees them to Calais. Mr. Jarrett's toils are nearly over, for my master himself sets out for England while the month is young.

He has been abroad nearly five and a half years. He went away a boy, he returns a man of almost twenty-one. He has seen many men and cities: he has studied the humanities and the arts with serious purpose; he is now what Sir Edward Coke prophesied he might become—a fine, accomplished gentleman.

Passionate he may sometimes be, and he likes his own way. But he has a kind, generous heart. He is a good brother, and an affectionate, dutiful grandson. So his faults shall not weigh the balance down. The church bells of Norfolk pealed their fond adieu at his departure; surely their echo rings in his heart as he steps on shore at Dover, leaning on the arm of good Humphrey Smith, who has come from Holkham to meet him. He cannot see that frowning Fate who stalks in front, and she will bide her time. He is come home to be happy and useful in his generation.

THOMAS COKE, AGED 20, BY TREVISANI.

From a portrait at Holkham.

SIR THOMAS COKE, K.B., AGED 30.

From a portrait at Holkham.

CHAPTER XXV

THOMAS COKE AND HIS WIFE

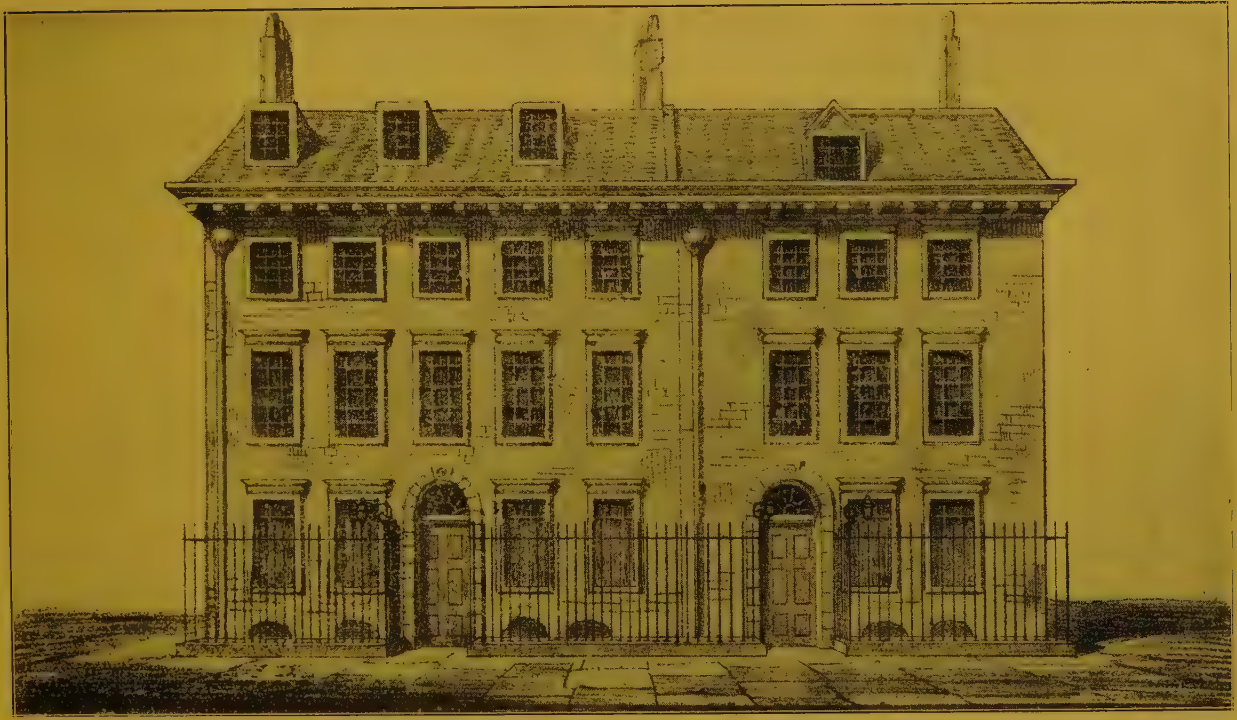
MR. COKE landed on May 18, 1718; he came of age on June 17, and then—hey, presto!—he found himself married on July 2! The good guardians had prepared everything, and the youth and the maiden made no objection. Lady Margaret Tufton, the bride, was not only a "Lady of Great Beauty, Singular Virtue and Goodness," as Edward, son of Humphrey Smith, testified in his journal book, but her blood was blue indeed. Her father, my Lord Thanet, came of ancient descent, and through his mother, Lady Margaret Sackville, was grandson to the famous Lady Anne Clifford, firstly Countess of Dorset, and, secondly, Countess of Pembroke and Montgomery, the lady who sits majestically in the centre of the great picture by Vandyke in the Double Cube Room at Wilton. This remarkable dame came to be sole heiress of the Cliffords, Earls of Cumberland; and the House of Lords, in 1691, declared that Lord Thanet was sole lineal heir to Robert de Clifford, summoned to Parliament as Baron de Clifford by King Edward I., so that Lady Margaret's father was Baron Clifford as well as Lord Thanet. Her mother, moreover, was a very great lady—Catharine, daughter of Henry Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle, of Welbeck. Lady Margaret's parents had the misfortune to lose all their three sons—they scarcely survived their birth; but five daughters grew up, and all of them married. Lady Catharine, the eldest, had married Lord Sondes, eldest son of the Earl of Rockingham, in 1708; Lady Anne, the second, in the same year, had become Countess of Salisbury; and three months before Lady Margaret espoused rich young Mr. Coke, the fourth sister, Lady Mary, had married the Earl of Harold, eldest son of the Duke of Kent, and an acquaintance of Mr. Coke's. The youngest, Lady Isabella, became the wife of Lord Nassau Pawlet, son of the Duke of Bolton, and, secondly, of Sir Francis Delaval.

So that Lady Margaret's lineage and connections were illustrious, and her dowry was to be £15,000—not a negligible sum in those days; she herself, at a later period, estimated it at but £8,000.

Grandmother Lady Ann Coke, Sir John Newton, Sir Edward and Cousin John Coke, Brother Bobby, and Mr. Lamb, the lawyer, came to the wedding at Hothfield, which was celebrated with due pomp and ceremony, and cost Mr. Coke a pretty penny.

His presents to his bride, in jewels alone, were worth more than £3,000, vails to servants came to nearly £200, "wedding favours" were £85, and his own large retinue had to be clothed in fine new liveries. Where the happy pair spent their honeymoon does not appear, but in three weeks they made a little tour to Tunbridge; they stay with Lord Fairfax and Lord Sondes, and so to London, where they were received with musical honours by "drummers and trumpeters of the 3rd Regt. of Foot, Grenadier Trumpeters," and the "Parish Musick." The Parish was St. Giles's, for they had taken Thanet House in Great Russell Street, Lord Thanet bargaining that he was to have an apartment in it as long as he lived, but he troubled them only for eleven years. Thanet House had been designed by Sir Christopher Wren, and was let to Lord Thanet in 1693 for sixty-two years. In 1755, Lord Leicester renewed the lease. Later it was occupied by Lord Tavistock, Lord Apsley, and then by Dr. Johnson's friend, Topham Beauclerk, who added a library which "reached half way to Highgate," as Horace Walpole said. In 1823, Elmes ("Life of Sir Christopher Wren") writes of it: "Sir Christopher's noble front, with its majestic cantilever cornice, has now been taken down by a speculative builder (Thomas Cubitt!) and common Act of Parliament fronts run up. The house is now Nos. 101 and 102, Great Russell Street." Then, Thanet House was almost in the country, and had a good garden, in which "Hunnysuckles" grew. Mr. Coke at once began to repair and enlarge the house, and furnished it very handsomely. All the family plate having been sold to help pay his father's debts, he spends nearly £3,000 at Mr. Paul Lamerie's (where is that plate now?), and Mr. Casey provides presses for the books, and sees to their binding.

LADY MARGARET TUFTON (1701-1775), WIFE TO THOMAS COKE.
"A Lady of Great Beauty, singular Virtue and Goodness."
From a portrait at Holkham.



THANET HOUSE, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, W.

From "St. Giles-in-the-Fields," by John Parton.

They leave this house in the workmen's hands in September, and pay a visit to Mr. Coke's step-aunt "Sue," now Mrs. Archer, at beautiful Welford, in Berkshire, thence journeying leisurely, seeing interesting places on their way, to Longford. Reverently, let us hope, they visit Stoke, and sacrifice to the manes of their splendid ancestor, the Chief Justice: they stay a night or two at Minster Lovell, pondering, perhaps, whether that ancient domain would be preferable to Holkham as their permanent country-seat. So to Oxford, whence gossiping Dr. Stratford, of Christ Church, presently writes to my Lord Harley[1]: "Mr. Coke of Norfolk and his young lady, your cousin, were here . . . we are told they went to see Blenheim, and that the Duchess of Marlborough, who was there at that time, sent them word they should not see it." But if Her Grace were indeed so churlish, why did Mr. Edward Smith enter one pound as "paid to the servants at Blenheim"? After a visit to Lord Nottingham at Burley-on-the-Hill, they reach Longford, and stay some time. Sir John Newton is informed in January:

> "Our whole time is employed either in field-sports or in entertainments at home, and I have retrieved my old facultys of following the hounds as well as ever. My house in town has taken up much more time in altering than I expected, which makes me stay here longer, and the civilities of Sir Edward Coke and the company we have makes the country more agreeable."

Sister Cary and her husband, Mr. Wyvill, were among the company.

In February, after a great cock match with Mr. Meynell, at Derby, they return to London, not without the aid of guides to show the way at various points. Mr. Casey has the house ready, and can now turn his attention to sending new furniture, etc., to Holkham.

Taxes seem agreeably moderate in Great Russell Street. Ground-rent is only £16; King's tax, £22 10s.; pew in St. Giles's, £8; scavenger, £2; window-light, £1 10s.; the poor, £9 4s.; New River water, £3 10s.; the watchman, £0 10s.

In July a son and heir arrives, and it seems curious that presently the parents go to Holkham, leaving the baby with nurses in the fresh air of Kensington. Perhaps it was thought that the country apothecaries ought not to be entrusted with so precious a child. A mother of today would hardly be parted from her sick first-born, or be calm while her husband wrote such a letter as this to Sir Hans Sloane:[1]

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[1] Edward Harley, second Earl of Oxford (1689-1741); married Lady Henrietta Cavendish-Holles, first cousin to Lady Margaret Coke.

> "Sr . . .
>
> "I am very much obliged for the care you are so kind as to take of my son, and it is a great satisfaction to me that he is under your eye. I am mighty sorry to hear this distemper still continues upon him. They write me word from London that you was so obliging as to offer to lett another Physician be sent for to consult with you . . . we are both very sure he can be in no better hands than yours, but if you wish further advice, I beg you will make choice of who you will (Dr. Chamberlain only excepted). My wife is desirous of mentioning to you whether it would not be proper to wean the child, but that we leave to you. Nothing further to write from this distant place. I continue well, tho' most of the family have been sick."

But Mr. Coke, having recovered his "facultys" of following the hounds, found plenty of amusement in distant Norfolk. There does not seem to have been so much cock-fighting as in Derbyshire, but he sets up foxhounds (which are kept at Beckhall), harriers, and greyhounds for coursing, and otter-hounds. The expenses of his hunting, apart from hunters, seem moderate—a little over £300 a year; but then, the wages of his three huntsmen amounted to not more than £20. Fox covers are made about Holkham, the name surviving to this day, and tenants for them are collected from here, there, and everywhere. Five brace are brought from Martham, a Coke property on the coast, away beyond the Broads, and £2 are paid for them. Five foxes from Creake, only a few miles from Holkham, are much cheaper—"for 5 foxes and entertaining them, 10/6." The same sum is given to a warrener for three large cubs. The shepherds of Egmere, "Old Weg" and many others, receive largesse for preserving foxes, and Shepherd Page, "for informing of Green for killing a fox and discovering his Master's son for snaring," is rewarded with half a crown. Informers were, perhaps, too ready to betray their fellows, for the accounts show many small sums paid "for finding out snarers," for "one shooting partridges," etc. Mr. Coke took his hounds to various gentlemen's houses, or to some town, and gave his neighbours two or three days' hunting. Such an entry as "Crying some hounds at Linn that was lost" shows that discipline was hard to keep up. Even when he had gone up to London for a few weeks in January, Mr. Coke would come back in February to hunt.

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[1] Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753), famous physician and collector of curiosities, which he left to the nation, thus founding the British Museum. He purchased the Manor of Chelsea (see p. 155).

No doubt he also enjoyed the diversion of shooting, no longer being limited to "sparrows and such small birds" as in his boyhood at Longford. Even before the days of enclosed fields and "preserving," Holkham was a good game country. But it is with something of a shock that we read of partridges and woodcock being shot or snared, or at any rate eaten, between April and September. In one year (1737), from Lady Day to Lady Day, the list of game sent up to London from Holkham shows 30 pheasants, 241 partridges, 195 woodcocks, 32 snipes, 27 wheatears, 6 hares. Hares, however, were more valued for the chase than for shooting. Many a boy went home richer by a shilling from Mr. Coke's pocket "for finding a hare," and one Jack Large had to be compensated for "6 holes bight in his Legg by a Dogg"; but whether the culprit was one of the hounds, or Lady Margaret's "Cæsar" or "Minny," Mr. Smith does not say.

But it was not all amusement in the country. Mr. Coke, aided by his agents, Humphrey Smith and Mr. Appleyard, was evidently a good landlord (see *post,* p. 264). He visited his different properties, and the yearly bills for repairs and improvements show that he took practical interest in his estates. He even took to farming himself. So large a sum as £2,000 was spent on making the great embankment to keep the sea from the reclaimed marshes. He seems to have been on excellent terms with his neighbours, visiting not only the greater folk at Houghton or Rainham, Fellbrigg or Melton, but the smaller country squires as well, entertaining them at Holkham. Mrs. Lybbe-Powis, visiting Mr. Jackson at Weasenham Hall, says: "In Mrs. Jackson's lifetime, the Orford, Leicester and Tounsend families and theirs used to meet almost every week at each other's houses."

Lady Margaret and her husband also took their part in county festivities, as great people should. Mrs. Bedingfield, writing a few years later to Mrs. Howard (the famous Countess of Suffolk), describes her visit to Norwich, where there was a prodigious crowd at the first Assembly, and Sir Thomas Hobart and Lady Margaret Coke began the Ball, Mr. Coke dancing with Lady Hobart.

Next day all the company went to the play.

> "The stage was too full for the actors, but a trapdoor opened and four of the Company fell in—one, a particular tall man who was High Sheriff last year, fell upon a pretty woman, and liked his situation so well, they could not get him out. . . . Lady M. Coke's ill-health would not permit her to keep our late hours, but we were inseparable in the day: The behaviour of the 2 ladies [Lady Margaret and Lady Hobart] was very agreeable to each other; they deserved the applause of the city; there was no civility omitted by them. But how the representative of the County [Thomas Coke had been elected for Norfolk in 1721] can answer not dancing with the High Sheriff's lady [Mrs. Rice Wiggett] and a pretty woman, the next election will show."

Mr. Coke's health, however, gave him trouble, and he has to pay annual visits to Bristol for the waters. In 1724 his "cure" lasts three months, and in thanking Sir John Newton for a very acceptable present of carp from Barrow's [*sic*] Court, he says he has wished to go and see that ancient mansion, but has not been well enough to do so.

Each year he stays several months at Holkham, and is active in planting trees from the first. Some of the older Scots firs that adorn the woods today can doubtless trace their descent up to a pound of fir seed bought for 10s. 6d. in 1721. The garden of the Manor House is enlarged, and its ponds are enlivened by birds; "sea pyes," which we call oyster-catchers; shell ducks; "mows," which I suppose to be gulls; and "Pearls," which is a name unknown. Storks come from Holland for the gardens, and are landed at Brancaster. Payment for their food shows that they lived many years. Later, four bustards brought from Newmarket became inmates of the gardens. Mr. Coke paid as much as a guinea apiece for them. But it was notoriously difficult to take a bustard alive.

No doubt the project of turning his architectural studies to the practical purpose of building a new house was in Thomas Coke's mind from his first return to England. Fifteen years, however, were to elapse before he began operations, and I think there was a reason for this, beyond that which has usually been assigned—namely, the patient care with which he gradually evolved his plans. He had speculated, to his undoing, in South Sea Stock, and Jamaica Gold Mines, and got into serious financial trouble. His neighbour at Houghton, Sir Robert Walpole, had bought much South Sea Stock and sold out at the top of the market at 1,000 per cent. profit, so that the temptation was great. Mr. Coke could reckon upon an income of about £10,000 a year, but his wish to make money quickly resulted in his being saddled, at the end of 1721, with debts amounting to £70,000, and tradesmen, even the household servants, were unpaid to the tune of £1,000. The tale of the speculation is appalling:

From Lord Finch, 2000 South Sea Stock	at 600	£12,000
„ Mr. Tufton, 1500	at 600	£ 9,000
„ Mr. Snow, 1500	at 800	£12,000
„ Dr. Chamberlain, 1500	at 700	£10,500

and so on.

Could this be the Dr. Chamberlain who was on no account to attend the son and heir?

Money has to be borrowed from Mr. Lamb, the opulent lawyer; from Lord Thanet, from Sir John Newton and many others. For a time it seems as if the trying days of Edward and Cary have come again. It ends in Mr. Coke having to pay more than £3,000 a year interest on borrowed money, and many, many years were to come and go before the principal was paid off.

To what a pass has Mr. Coke's "sanguine temperament" —noted with apprehension by Sir Edward—brought him! It is to be feared that he was a gambler by instinct. But he was luckier at cards than at speculation in shares. Everybody played then, and played high, so that he need not be set down as a scamp for winning £2,445 in this very year of disaster from his friends Lords Finch, Hillsborough, Sunderland, and a Mr. J. Harvey. Perhaps they won his money next year.

But until his finances were somewhat re-established, there would not be money for bricks and mortar, and this, I take it, is the reason why the new house at Holkham was not undertaken earlier. That Mr. Kent, however, was in frequent communication with Mr. Coke is clear from the testimony of the accountant who paid him, so that the pair of virtuosi, with the help of Lord Burlington, had many a talk, no doubt, about the masterpiece which was one day to replace the old Manor House of the Wheatleys.

In 1721, Lady Margaret has another son, christened Thomas, but the child lives only a short time and is buried in the family dormitory at Tittleshall. In 1723 my lady was churched, and payments for a shroud and a gravedigger tell a similar tale of infant mortality. Lady Ann, too, bids a final adieu to Beckhall and its waters. Her grandson puts his servants into mourning, Mr. Casey's suit costing £10, and he buys in some useful memorials at her sale. Full-length portraits of the Duke and Duchess of Leeds, and two of herself by Kneller and Dahl, and two of Edward Coke as a child, were cheap enough at £15; and a fine parrot with two cages at two guineas, and a little bird in a fine cage at 10s. 6d. found good homes with Lady Margaret, who already owned a cockatoo, a parrot, and a macaw.

Matters financial do not improve for a long time; still Mr. Coke, knowing what it is to want money, can lend money—£1,000—to a distressed friend. This was his namesake, Sir Thomas Coke, of Melbourne in Derbyshire, who had lost £3,000 at cards to the Duchess of Buckingham.

Mr. Matthew Lamb writes to him that Sir Thomas "Came to London on purpose to get money to satisfy the Duchess of Buckingham's demands, and he told me that he didn't know what he could do unless you would be so obligeing as to lend it him. But being in company with Lord Sunderland and Mr. Pelham, he was telling them how the Dutchess had served him, and Mr. Pelham said it was very scandalous, and that he had £2000 at Sir Thomas' service."

The Duchess of Buckingham and Normanby, who said she was the daughter of James II. by Lady Dorchester, was the haughty dame who wrote to Lady Huntingdon about her patronage of the Methodists: "Their doctrines are most repulsive, strongly tinctured with disrespect to their superiors. It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common wretches who crawl the earth. I wonder yr. Ladyship should relish sentiments so much at variance with high rank and good breeding." Yet this was the same lady who said to her doctor, "Whatever you may think is the matter with me, always have an eye to the p—x." Mr. Lamb thought this large loan a great proof of friendship, as indeed it was. The Cokes of Melbourne were no kin to the Cokes of Norfolk, but Thomas of Holkham had made friends with him of Melbourne in earlier days at Longford. Sir Thomas, of Melbourne, had a daughter Charlotte who married the son of this same Mr. Lamb, the lawyer, and took the Melbourne property with her, with the result that their son became Viscount Melbourne, and their grandson was the famous Prime Minister.

CHAPTER XXVI

THOMAS COKE—BROTHER BOBBY

IN 1727, the year after this generous transaction, there was mourning at Longford, for kind Sir Edward Coke. He left his estates in turn to the younger children and their heirs of Edward and Cary, but if the "grand estates" should go to either of the younger sons or their heirs, then Longford was to go to the next in remainder.

So Edward, the "Neddy" whom we saw at Paris and at Luneville in the spring of 1718, succeeded. He never married, and enjoyed being Squire of Longford only six years. Nothing relating to his later years has survived.

Longford devolved then upon his brother Robert; and here let us leave the eldest brother of all to go on with his plans for Holkham, and enquire what is known about Bobby.

Bobby "in his flattering youth" was no exception to the rule that the Cokes were heedless about getting into debt. At his brother's wedding he was borrowing small sums from the footmen. When he was old enough to leave the care of Mr. Casey, his brother bought him a commission in the Duke of Bolton's Regiment of Life Guards, and stipulated that he should live on his pay, as we learn from a letter sent by Mr. Lamb to Sir John:

"*Feb:* 14. 1720.

"HOND. SIR,

"I have discoursed Mr. Coke about the management of his Brother Mr. Robert Coke; his pay is about £270 a year, the subsistence money payable every month is £17, which is £4. 5. a week, which Mr. Coke has ordered to be paid instantly into Mr. Casey's hands, out of which he is to pay Mr. Robt. Coke a Guinea a week for his pockett expenses, and the remainder to be kept apart for the payment of his Master's Cloaths and other necessaryes, so that it is intended he shall wholly live within the compass of his pay—and not break into his annuity, I am Sr.

"Yr. most obt.
"M. LAMB."

Bobby found it very difficult to live on his pay, as most boys of sixteen in the Life Guards would, and tired out Sir

John with appeals for money. His letters are so ingenuous that one or two shall be given, and they will show that a hundred years before Captain Rawdon Crawley got his commission in the Life Guards Green, cornets in that gallant regiment were apt to want more money than their guardians saw fit to give them.

"1722. *Sept.* 16.

"To Sir John Newton.

"The money that you sent me last by my man, I have spent and paid away, for we staid a great deal longer than was expected upon the Party with the King which cost me as well as the Rest a Great Deal of Money, and now I am sent upon a Party to Brentford to attend the Prince for a week and that will cost as much more. So that I must have some money if you think proper. I own I have spent a prodigious deal, but no more than what all the other Officers have done, for I have enquired, and a great many says they have spent a Great Deal More. My horses stands me in a Great Deal of Money, I being obliged to keep three, one of them not being sound I can't sell him or else that would lessen my expenses. I find that when I am in London, I spend less by much than when I am at Quarters or at Camp, for then I don't pay for meat drink or lodging. If you can send me by the Bearer the same sum as you sent before it will oblige

"Your dutifull Grandson,
"R. Coke."

Then a fortnight afterwards:

"*Oct.* 3, 1722.

"I don't suppose but that you may be a little surprised at my sending to you so often for money, but as I want it, I am obliged to send for it, but I shall be sorry if it disobliges you. Thinking you would not believe I should be wanting money so soon, I have sent you some bills that are not paid, so that I was forced to borrow Money from my Captain to pay them. . . . The sum was 10 Guineys. Likewise here is a bill for Hay and Corn £13 18. 0. Then there is a bill for farrying my horse, nineteen shillings and eight Pence, besides Washing which amounts to £2. And then I should desire you would let me have a little money for myself. If my Brother Coke was in town, I would not trouble you, for I am sure if he had it, he would be so kind as not to lett me want it.

" . . . I assure you, Sir, you need not be angry, for I wd. not send unless I really want it.

"From the Bell & Castle, Windsor."

All our sympathies are surely with Bobby, poor child! and so were Grandfather Newton's for a time. Sir John is merciful at first, but soon he bids Mr. Lamb to write and say that he has much exceeded what he ought to allow, and cannot justify himself in listening to any more appeals. He recommends that Bobby should lay all his debts before his brother when Thomas comes up for Parliament, and then "Some way may be thought of for clearing up your debts."

Next year, however, Bobby is at it again, and Sir John writes quite sternly to his grandson:

"*July* 13, 1723.

"Captain,

"I had yours of ye 8th instant, and am sorry you should apply to me for money, it is what I can't justify to the Court of Chancery, and it is what yr. brother agreed when your Commission was bought that you should live out of the profits of your Commission, your brother can best judge what Occasions you may have had for money, and if he is satisfied that you want any he can furnish you out of my Lady Ann's legacy, I recommend you to suit your expenses to your comings in. You have that benefit which a Great many Gent. has not, that when you are in town, your lodging and dyet costs you nothing, and you should then save money to bear the extraordinary expences in the country.

"Yr. affecate. Grandfather.
"J. Newton.

"To Captain Coke at his Quarters
at Southampton."

Times improved, however, with poor Bobby. He found a rich wife—Lady Jane Wharton, daughter of Philip, Duke of Wharton, widow of Mr. Holt of Redgrave; he succeeded to Longford and the Manchester estate that had come with Clement Coke's wife. Queen Caroline made him her Vice-Chamberlain, he travelled in Italy, he got into Parliament, and lived a prosperous, though childless, life till his death in 1750, when Longford descended to his Sister Ann Robert's eldest son, Wenman, who then took the name of Coke.

The last letter I have found is to his step-uncle, Sir Michael Newton, and shows a very different Bobby from the Cornet who was so hard up. Sir Michael's wife was Countess of Coningsby in her own right.

" . . . The News that you have heard of the Norfolk election is true, and I hope you'll be so Good as to attend the Petition, provided we persist in carrying it on, I hope it won't be brought in without the cause is very just, and I do firmly believe we have a legal majority by a very Great one. . . . I called at Thorpe on my way from Holkham to Longford and think I never saw a place more improved. Lord Portmore is now in town and I will write to him. Yesterday the

Royal Family was an hunting. The Princess Amelia had a fall, and was dragg'd almost fivety yards, but by good luck her Pettycoat was torn, and left her on the ground and no harm done. . . . My humble service to Lady Coningsby. . . .

"ROBT. COKE.

"LONDON, *Aug.* 24, 1734.

"P.S.—Since I wrote I have seen Ld. Portmore, and show'd him yr. letter, he thanks you, and says he himself has so many horses that he wd. be glad to give them away, therefore can't think of buying any."

In 1748, Lady Jane writes that her husband has a bad cough ; in 1750, in another letter she says he has been ill, but is better. It was a case of "Monsieur se porte mieux . . . Monsieur est mort!" The day she wrote it he died. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that he, too, inherited his mother's fatal disease.

CHAPTER XXVII

SIR THOMAS COKE, LORD LOVELL—A PEER AT HOLKHAM

THE great merits of Mr. Coke of Norfolk as a stanch Whig and follower of Sir Robert Walpole, and also as a Commoner of vast estates, naturally pointed him out as a person to be advanced in rank, and to be remembered when any little sinecures, with salary, fell vacant. Thus, on May 27, 1726, Mr. Coke was made Serjeant-at-Arms in Ordinary, "attending upon his Majesty's person . . . with the Wages and Fee of three shillings by the Day, and also 2/6 by the Day Board Wages. . . ." In 1725 he was one of the thirty-six (his step-uncle Michael Newton was another) chosen to be made Knights of the revived military Order of the Bath, and this was no slight honour, though Horace Walpole did describe the Order as "an artful bank of thirty-six ribands to supply a fund of favours." Pine's splendid book of the ceremonies at the Installation shows that Sir Thomas Coke's three Esquires were Mr. Ralph Wilbraham, Mr. Worcester Wilson, and Mr. Jean Raworth, all gentlemen of blood and arms. I should like to know why he chose them, for I cannot find that they were "of the blood."

But greater honours were in store. On May 28, 1728, Sir Thomas Coke, "in consideration of his great merits," as the obliging Mr. Collins puts it, was advanced by George II. to the Peerage as Lord Lovell, of Minster Lovell, in Oxfordshire. This was a property bought by the Chief Justice from the Earl of Bedford. In the Middle Ages, the family of Lovel, who became Barons Lovell, had owned it. Richard the 2nd's "Lovell that Dog" was the 13th Baron.

To be a Peer in the reign of George II. was to hold a position the splendour of which we can but dimly realise. Collins, in 1756, enumerates only 178 members of the Upper House, other than Princes of the Blood and Bishops.

Even with the heavy interest to pay on borrowed money, Lord Lovell had a considerable income, and this was presently to be increased as a further reward for his merits. He was given a reversionary grant of a lighthouse at Dungeness for thirty-one years, and was to receive a penny a ton from every vessel which passed it, at a rent of £6 13s. 4d. to the Crown. Charles II. had given this lighthouse and its emoluments to Lady Margaret's uncle, Richard, Lord Thanet, so it was as well to keep it more or less in the family. In 1733 he was appointed Captain of the Band of gentlemen Pensioners; and in the same year he was appointed Joint Postmaster-General with Mr. Edward Carteret, salary £1,000 a year—a comfortable increase of income, and the work cannot have been overwhelming, though he was supposed by facetious friends to spend his time in perusing the private letters which passed through the Post Office. Lord Chesterfield asks Lady Suffolk, in 1733:

> "As to the contents of your letter, did you reflect on the strict examinations it was to undergo before it reached me; did you consider that it was to be submitted to the penetration of Lord Lovell, and to the more slow, but not less sure sagacity of Mr. Carteret; that from them a faithful copy of it was to be transmitted to others of not inferior abilities, and known dabs at finding out mysteries. . . ?"

In 1733 he was appointed, with Lord Albemarle, to go to Holland to inform the Prince of Orange that the Princess Royal should become his wife, and to invite the Prince to come over to England.

So Mr. Coke became Lord Lovell, and earned such praise as an ornament to the Peerage, that sixteen years later he was further advanced, and made Viscount Coke of Holkham, and Earl of Leicester[1]—"an old promise which my Father had obtained for him," said Horace Walpole. Lady Margaret's merits, also, were not to go unrecognised, she being declared in 1734 Baroness Clifford, as representing in the female line, through her great-grandmother, Lady Anne Clifford, the Lord de Clifford so created by Edward I.

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[1] Lord Lovell owned no property in Leicestershire, but in 1743 the Earldom of Leicester (in the family of Sidney) became extinct. It was formerly the custom to bestow on a newly made Peer a recently lapsed title. So, when Sir William Scott agitated Dr. Johnson by regretting that he had not been a lawyer, and become Lord Chancellor, he added: "Now that the title of Lichfield, your native city, is extinct, you might have had it."

The high-spirited, intelligent boy whose "sanguine temperament" caused Sir Edward Coke to indulge in anxious prophecies (see p. 174) is now a man of over thirty, believed to be very rich, important, a politician, and a man of the first fashion. So far there is no evidence that the prophecies were proving true in any very serious way, for although Lord Lovell did gamble, and was not, perhaps, an impeccably faithful husband, the spirit of the age in which such a woman as the Duchess of Buckingham could be tolerated in Society, looked upon gambling and infidelity as only among the "lighter vices." Lady Louisa Stuart, writing nearly a hundred years afterwards, spoke of Lord Leicester's "notoriously violent and dissolute character"; but gossip of that sort need not be taken as gospel, especially as Lady Louisa and her family were, equally notoriously, partisans of an opposite faction to the Leicester clan. She speaks also of Lady Margaret as "a peaceable inoffensive woman, long inured to obedience to her ill-tempered husband." But, as we shall see, there is another side to that question.

Lord Lovell does not look a specially good-tempered man in his portraits, it must be confessed, but there is no good reason to suppose that the family life in Great Russell Street or at Holkham was anything but pleasant.

Thanet House was large, and beautifully ordered, as may be judged from an inventory of its furniture, and especially from some of it which is at Holkham now. But even the mansions of the great were not perfect. If mention of so disgraceful and disgusting a detail (to borrow the language of Mr. Smauker) may be permitted, it was not free from an insect known to science as *Cimex lectularius,* and too well known to Mrs. Thomas Carlyle. Yet do we read in the accounts, "To Mr. Southall for Killing of Buggs—12/-." Pray Heaven that the creatures did not disturb the repose of my lord and miladi! Mr. Southall became a permanent official, with the title of "Buggman," at a salary of a guinea a year. Very likely this scourge was not made very much of. People who travelled abroad and lay in small towns were thoroughly used to the presence of insects. Holkham Hall, it may be hoped, was free from them.

By 1729, the new park at Holkham had been fenced in and planted, and in that year Kent's finely designed obelisk was raised as its centre, surrounded by what was to become a magnificent grove of ilexes and beeches (still one of the greater glories of Holkham), in which was presently built a temple, where "Company" might come to drink tea or chocolate.

Though the country immediately surrounding the site of his house was "an open and barren estate," as Lord Leicester has recorded over the entrance to his palace, it cannot have been unattractive. Wide-stretching downs overlooking the sea, the fold courses white with sheep, and interspersed with good crops of wheat and barley, and rye, and vetches, can be very delightful, though in sharp contrast to the more peaceful, well-wooded valleys and plains of the Midland and Southern Counties. Except where planted by the Walpoles or Cokes, Mrs. Delany saw no trees in Norfolk as late as 1774. Wood for faggots and logs for the fire had to be brought to Holkham from Tittleshall or Longham, from trees that had escaped the depredations of Mr. Futter and Mrs. Clements (see p. 307), evidence, if need be, that till Sir Thomas began to plant, there were few trees at Holkham save such as surrounded the Manor House. In the early thirties the foundations were laid of the new house which the combined architectural skill of Mr. Kent, Thomas Coke, and Lord Burlington had designed. One Mr. Matthew Brettingham, a Norwich architect, was engaged as Clerk of the Works, and a very efficient one he made, for a better built house cannot be found.

The great avenue dates from 1733, and in the same year much of the park was cleared of whins or gorse. Lord Lovell's own farm seems to have prospered, and was not expensive. Twelve bullocks, for instance, weighing 472 stone, cost only £96 8s. Fifteen sheep, weighing 69 stone, cost £14 14s. The price of wheat fluctuates, from 18s. a coomb in 1737 to 14s. next year, to rise to 16s. in 1739, and up to 20s. in 1740. (A coomb equals 4 bushels or 18 stone.)

CHAPTER XXVIII

SIR THOMAS COKE, LORD LOVELL—A MAN OF FASHION

AND what, meanwhile, was become of all the statues, and pictures, and the wonderful books which Thomas Coke had collected on the Continent before 1718? They must have adorned Thanet House. When he made his additions to it, he probably built a room large enough for Diana, and Jupiter, and Apollo, and their fellows. The books were certainly there, under the care of Mr. Ferrari, and since the collection was constantly receiving additions, we read of the Yellow Drawing-Room being turned into an extra library. There this prince of collectors could turn over the mysterious pages of the "Libro della Natura," written by Leonardo da Vinci's own hand, and illustrated by him also; the Dante which had belonged to Æneas Sylvius (Pope Pius II.), and 6 other manuscripts of the divine poet; the Boccacio painted by Taddeo Crivelli for Alberto d'Este; the lovely prayer-book given by Lorenzo dei Medici to his bride Clarice Orsini; beautiful books of Bernardo Rota, the poet; and those treasures of ancient days, the ninth-century Cicero from Cluny, or the Gospels which Lutharius the Deacon wrote for the monastery of Schütthorn about A.D. 800. He could select from 700 MSS., and from a large collection of early "Incunabula," all of them in perfect condition, and most of them Italian.

The memory of Italy's delight remained strong even though the house planning, the planting, family duties, and the claims of politics and Society were very engrossing. In 1726, Sir Thomas writes a letter, in very fair French, to Cardinal Gualtieri,[1] announcing the despatch to His Eminence of a book of antiquities, to the illustration of which the Cardinal had contributed some drawings. This was a learned work on Etruscan antiquities written early in the seventeenth century by a Scotsman, Thomas Dempster of Muresk, but never printed. Mr. Coke had found and purchased the manuscript at Florence; had printed it, adorned with a vast number of figures, at very considerable expense. He thinks the Cardinal will find it to be very curious and interesting. He hopes soon to see His Eminence, for he proposes to pass a year in Italy with his family, longing to see again that lovely country. I do not know when he carried out this journey, but he was certainly abroad again in 1737, and that seems to have been the last time.

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[1] Filippo Antonio Gualtieri, Nuncio in France, 1700-06; Cardinal Protector of Scotland and England, 1717. Died 1728.

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Some letters which remain throw a little light on the doings of Lord and Lady Lovell. Her ladyship (at the date of this letter she was still Lady Margaret Coke) shows that she was, like Mrs. Cadwallader, in "Middlemarch," "much too well born not to be an amateur of medicine." She writes to Sir Hans Sloane, the great doctor. [B. M. 4034, f. 368.]

"HOTHFIELD.
"*Aug.* 14.

"SR.

"I give you the trouble of this Letter to desire you will send me yr. directions what you think will be proper for Sister Sondes—she has for a week complain'd of a soreness at her stomach, and 2 days ago I saw in her spittle little spots of Blood, which she says she has since this month, and this morning she spit it again. I can't persuade her to take asses' milk, if you think it proper she should have anything made up in town, be pleased to order Mr. Grimes. She has taken tonight a little Lucatellis Balsam mix't with Conserve of Roses, but this is of our own prescribing and may not be proper, but I hope can do her no harm, she has no cough or fever. I have been myself much out of order this last week, with something tending to an intermittent fever, wch. began with a vomiting, I took a vomit and sent for Sr. Wm. Boier, who has ordered [me] to take ye. Barke Boyl'd in water twice a day. I continue drinking asses' milk, but I find some return of the fever every night tho' but little, for it was never violent. . . . I was forced to leave off yr. Spaw waters and Bitters they heated me so much. . . . Sr. William advises me to drink nothing but Barley water or milk and water but I don't find it agree with me who am

"Yr. humble servt.
"M. COKE."

Thomas Coke's letters, other than those to such friends as the Duke of Newcastle or Lord Hardwicke, show him as the gay man of fashion and the world, but I daresay there is no great harm in their persiflage. He professes a passion for a certain lovely Fanny, no doubt Lady Fanny Shirley, and laments her preference for Lord Chesterfield. She was a tall beauty.

> "They ride together, the great trouble being that the Lord is forced to stand in his stirrups, while she makes her back ake with stooping to hear him. But I am in treaty for a monstrous tall horse that is showed on show here, which I will present him with. We are generous rivals, and good friends."

Lord Chesterfield immortalised pretty Fanny in a song—"When Fanny, blooming fair."

Next year, Lord Lovell still professed that his passion was unabated, and mixed up his sufferings from love and gout, in humoursome fashion, with his pleasure in architecture and music. Since the days when he had lessons on the flute, bought a "harpsicall" at Rome, and admired the singing woman at Palermo, Thomas Coke had delighted in music. The letter now to be quoted tells us more about this taste, and is specially interesting, not only because it is the only letter I have lighted on written by him to Lord Burlington (it is among the Althorp Papers, and Lord Spencer kindly allows me to print it), but because I feel sure that by "the Signor" he means Kent. After apologising for not being able to give an appointment in the Post Office which his friend had asked for, he says:

> "I now begin to think of London, only wait till my Pocketts are full which I hope will be next week, I shall wait on you with my Portefeuille, and make the Signor scold, for now we must think of the inside of the rooms. I am sorry to hear Opera do so badly, you know, as a virtuoso, I encourage both, and have subscribed to Handell,[1] for which I have been severely reprimanded by my brethren. Nothing but your goodness could have made you bear my Company at Bath; hearing the groans and complaints of the miserable is a condescension more than human nature allows, we protestants don't even allow it to the Saints. But as you could not hear my complaints without hearing of all that was good and beautiful and heavenly, I think that even they had their charms, and a little lessen your merit—even to talk of her, to think of her, occasions raptures beyond expression. But to think of those damned

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[1] The rivalry between Handel and Buononcini and their partisans had resulted in two opera-houses opening their doors at the same time, and both lost heavily; Handel was even unable to pay his creditors for a time. Tickets were not too highly priced; in 1740, a "Subscription to 50 Operas which is to begin in November" was but £21.

dull walks at Jo. Windhams, those cold and insipid straight walks which would make the Signor sick, which even Mr. Pope himself could not by description enliven, to think that they should be the scenes of such a romantick passion makes me sick. I don't wonder now that the noble Earl prefers Amiconi's[1] to the Signor's scenes, but your Lordship perceives when I enter on their subject I don't know what I do, therefore 'tis fit I should finish.

"HOLKHAM,
"*Nov.* 26. 1736."

A letter to the Hon. George Berkeley shows that cousinship between him and the Cokes, however remote, was still acknowledged and valued. Lord Lovell remembers (he has been having a fine new pedigree made out) how more than a hundred years before, Sir Robert Coke had married charming Theophila Berkeley, and that Edward, son of John Coke, had married Elizabeth Berkeley. Mr. George Berkeley had just married Lady Suffolk,[2] Queen Caroline's favourite Lady of the Bedchamber, the supposed mistress of George II.

"HOLKHAM,
"*July* 23, 1735.

"Jacta est alea, my dearest Cozin and brother married man, I heartily wish you joy, you have made a choice where the most agreeable beautys of the mind are joined to those of the body. . . . As it is usual for married men after a short time to visit their Uncles, if you thought visiting a cozin would do as well, I should be most glad to see you here. My sincere respects to Lady Suffolk."

The letters are very good-humoured, and my lord's feeling for Lady Fanny does not sound very serious. Surely he loved his building and planting better even than his philandering with the ladies. Though never indifferent to the charms of the fair, the Cokes do not appear to be a licentious race. Architecture, art, and letters were the loadstars in Thomas Coke's life. It was the *mode* for fine gentlemen to have desperate flirtations, and Lord Lovell must be no exception to the rule. He spent so much time at Holkham while the walls of the great house were rising from earth that he cannot have had much opportunity for scandalous love-making. Many visitors come and go, and my lord pays visits to Houghton, Euston, etc. Always generous, he subscribes ten guineas to the paving the streets of Fakenham in 1738, and, next year, twenty-one guineas for the same object to the neighbouring town of Wells. He helps to build a jury-room at Holt, and sends five guineas in 1740 to the sufferers from a fire at Blakeney. Such a neighbour was likely to be popular. There were no panel doctors in those days, and whenever a servant or workman needed it, my lord paid the doctor and nurse, as when Mr. Fassett, surgeon, " Cured Robt. Garret of a wound in the thigh which he received by sliding down a wheat mow upon a Fork."

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[1] Amiconi, a fashionable painter of stage scenery.

[2] George, fourth son of Charles, second Earl of Berkeley, married June, 1735, Henrietta, daughter of Sir Henry Hobart, widow of Charles, ninth Earl of Suffolk.

Lord Dartmouth allows me to print an amusing epistle in verse, supposed to be from Lord Lovell to Lord Chesterfield, of which he possesses the manuscript. It proclaims my lord's detachment from love and politics, owing to the fascination of his Holkham improvements and is entitled " An Epistle from Ld. Lovel to Lord Chesterfield at Bath, Wrote by Mr. Poulteney."[1] Flavia, of course, was Lady Fanny.

FLORE DUM BAIÆ PROPERAS, &c.

Whilst you My Lord with Subtle tricks
Some Scheme of Love or politicks
   Are now at Bath pursuing,
Here Kent and I are planting Clumps
Not minding whom our Monarch Rumps
   Or what Sr. Robert's doing.

What tho' you now successfull prove,
And in your Prince & Flavia's Love
   Without a rival range,
Flavia by younger Beau's beset
In time may a new Lover get
   And even the Prince may change.

* * * * *

Amours and Business both I shun
Careless if Keiser be Undone,
   Nor hopeing much from Spain.
For Court Intrigues I ne'er enquire
Nor who blows oftnest George's Fire,
   Valmot or Deloraine.

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[1] William Pulteney (1684-1764) was the famous statesman, orator, wit, and scholar. Created Earl of Bath, 1742.

Contented I enjoy my home
Design a temple, Build a Dome,
  Or raise an Obelisk.
Much Idler pleasure you pursue
Loosing your time and money too
  At Billiards or at Whisk.

But still to Flavia & to you
I own the obligation due
  That I have quitted Riott.
Her cruelty and your success
Taught me to know true happiness
  And here to plant in Quiet.

So when next Winter Patriot schemes
Are found to be but empty Dreams,
  You'l wish for some retreat.
I prophecy we shall agree
In time you'll come to think like me
  And love Your Country Seat.

It is pleasant to know that the clever pupil of Mr. Ellis and Mr. Wilkins grew up to hold a prominent and friendly place among the brilliant wits and scholars of that very fascinating age. Lord Lovell seems to have had a very large acquaintance. In one progress in 1741, he stays at Goodwood, Wilton, Mount Edgcumbe, Dodington, Rousham (where so much work by his friend Kent is still to be seen), and other fine places. The expenses of the journey were entered as £318, plus £142 in gifts to servants, bell-ringers, and the poor.

But that he could still take some interest in politics is shown by a letter to one of his most intimate friends, the Duke of Newcastle:

"My dear Lord.

"Your letter gave me the greatest pleasure, and I should not have failed to answer it so long, had I not been entirely taken up with the good company here who I followed to Euston. We wanted nothing but your company to make me quite happy. . . . I most heartily congratulate your Grace on the glorious victory[1] we have obtained over the French. . . . There is a good English proverb, strike while the iron is hot; we have the French down, I hope we shall keep them so. . . . Until we can indemnify the Queen of Hungary for the loss of Silesia at the expense of the French—I am persuaded they are now as low as at the

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[1] The battle of Dettingen, at which King George commanded in person.

Peace of Utrecht, and if the Dutch and our Allys stand by us, we might make them give up Lorraine at least, and perhaps Strasburg . . . I cannot think they have those resources that the Vox Populi—that fountain of all untruth—gives them. I am persuaded if we stand firm, we may put France on such a foot as not to trouble us again in our time, but I shall be laught at for this. But I am an Englishman, consequently a mule and self sufficient, and if I am not believed, will think myself Cassandra. . . . I am glad Chesterfield is so frisky. I know him to be so good, and of so tender a disposition, that he can't bear another to suffer, even tho' he be benefited. Therefore I doubt he'll be sorry for the misfortune which has happened to the French. Hard hearted John of Devon will rejoice at it. I would not forgive him for not coming here, had he not once designed it, but by not knowing his own mind he so well justifies me who am so often in the same circumstances that to have the honour to be like him, I would even sacrifice the pleasure of his company.

"Yr. Grace's most obt.
"Lovell.

"The Lisbon paquet is not yet released; if you won't write before next Session, I will impeach you. God bless the King! John will like him now, he is the first of our Kings that I at present recollect who has won a battle Since Harry Vth. King William was always beat, tho' his retreats were glorious.

"Holkham,
"*June*, 1743."

"John of Devon" was William, the third Duke of Devonshire, and the intimacy between the Lord of Holkham and His Grace at Chatsworth, and his son Lord Hartington, show that Lord Lovell consorted on equal terms not only with the "wits," but with the most respectable society that England then offered. Of course, he had enemies. One of them was that Irish Lord Egmont, who founded the colony of Georgia, and filled his diaries with ill-natured scandal about Lord Lovell and others. But as he tells such ridiculous lies as that Lady Margaret's portion was £80,000, and that her husband used this sum to recover his affairs after his South Sea losses, even withholding her pin-money, it is not necessary to put faith in anything that he says. Lady Margaret herself said that her dowry was but £8,000, though she had been promised double that amount.

EDWARD VISCOUNT COKE (1719-1753).

From a Pastel Portrait at Holkham.

LADY MARY CAMPBELL (1727-1811), WIFE TO EDWARD VISCOUNT COKE.

From a Pastel Portrait at Holkham.

CHAPTER XXIX

EDWARD VISCOUNT COKE AND HIS WIFE

WHEN escorting Mr. Coke to the landing-place at Dover, in all the joy of return and expectation, we said that he could not see the frowning Fate that was before him, and that she would bide her time. It is now proper to tell the story of that fate which came to sadden his life, and render riches, high place, reputation, even his dearest pursuits of architecture and art, but as dust and ashes, as the crackling of thorns under the pot.

He and his wife had one surviving son, Edward, born in 1719. At first, no more hopeful son ever gave comfort to his parents. He was clever and, it should seem, industrious. He went to Westminster School, and Le Neve has preserved a newspaper cutting, 1730, about the Anniversary Feast there: "His Royal Highness the Duke[1] attending, and hearing the scholars performing their exercises in Latin and English before a great many of the Nobility and Persons of Quality. In the evening he returned to witness the Play of Amphitrion acted by the scholars, wherein Mr. Coke, son of the Lord Lovel, distinguished himself in a very particular manner."

In 1737 the young man is at Oxford, and in the following year is sent on "the Grand Tour." His father writes to the Duke of Newcastle begging him to permit a Mr. Villette to accompany his son from Turin to see the Carnival at Venice, which Mr. Villette dare not do without His Grace's leave, and says, "My son has behaved so extremely well I would not give him the discouragement of refusing his request that I should write to you."

In 1740, Mr. Coke comes of age; another of Le Neve's cuttings supplies a description of the celebration at Holkham:

"Norwich, June 28.—On Friday the 20th instant, was celebrated at Holkham in Norfolk the Birthday of the Hon. Mr. Coke only son to the Rt. Hon. the Lord Lovell, who then came of age. The entertainment was preceeded by a fine Fire-work, and a beautiful Illumination in the wilderness, in a most exquisite taste. The Collation for the Gentlemen and Ladies was on one magnificent Table in the Orangery which consisted of 130 covers, adorned with a fine sideboard and several beautiful decorations. The whole was conducted with the greatest elegancy, and concluded with a Ball which continued till 4 o'clock in the morning. The concourse of people was so great on this occasion that upwards of 40 Hogshead of Ale were given to the Populace."

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[1] This must surely be the Duke of Cumberland, at this date nine years old.

The account books add details:

"Looking to the Bonfires £1 1: Men that fired the Guns £1 1: Mr. Lemon's expences going about the Country to engage Musick, £1 15: 5 bands (musick) from Norwich, at £2 2 each: and 2 more at £1 11 6, and 2 more from Thetford, 3 from Lynn, and 2 from the Comedians, £1 11 6: Mr. Whitley from Sir Jacob Astley's, playing the Harpischord, £2 2: Mr. Alderson for filling 1991 small lamps with Tallow at 1d. each, £8 5 11: Bringing the Fireworks from London, £5."

Next year Mr. Coke is elected for Norwich, and takes to Parliament with eagerness. He has become a friend of Horace Walpole, who says: "You can't imagine the zeal of the young men on both sides, Lds. Fitzwilliam,[1] Hartington,[2] and my friend Coke, on Our's."

In 1742 he goes again to Italy, and we hear of him at Florence with Horace Walpole, the poet Gray, and Sir Francis Dashwood (of Hell Fire Club notoriety); drawing the "Sortes virgilianæ" for Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; and Lady Pomfret[3] declares that Mr. Coke is "one of the few she has met who ought to have been sent abroad; most of our travelling youth neither improve themselves, nor credit their country."

In 1745 it is time for the young gentleman, now Viscount Coke, to marry and raise up an heir to the splendid property and the new palace. Horace Walpole knows all about it: "My Lord Coke is going to be married to a Miss Shawe with

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[1] William, third Earl Fitzwilliam (1719-1756); married Lady Anne, eldest daughter of Thomas, Marquess of Rockingham.

[2] William, fourth Duke of Devonshire, K.G. (1720-1764), Prime Minister, 1756-57; married Lady Charlotte, only daughter of Richard, Earl of Cork and Burlington.

[3] Henrietta Louisa Jeffreys, wife to Thomas Fermor, first Earl Pomfret; died 1761. Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Caroline. "An excellent wife and mother, she exposed herself to constant ridicule by wishing to pass for a learned woman" (D.N.B.).

£40,000"; but presently, "My Lord Coke's match is broken off upon some coquetry of the lady with Mr. Mackenzie at the Ridotto. My lord Leicester says there shall not be a third lady in Norfolk of the species of the two fortunes that matched at Rainham and Houghton."

But malignant Fate had determined on her cruel course. Lord Coke was become a rake, given to gambling and drinking, and his parents, in an evil hour, arranged that he should marry Lady Mary Campbell, youngest daughter of John, second Duke of Argyll, the famous soldier and Scottish statesman, immortalised by Sir Walter Scott's "Heart of Midlothian"; and though nothing could be alleged against her character, she was the last lady in the world likely to influence and reform a rake.

Lady Louisa Stuart, who knew Lady Mary Coke very well in after years, and whose mother, Lady Bute, was of Lady Mary's own period, wrote, in 1827, a very brilliant account of Lady Mary's tragic, ludicrous history. The main outlines of the story shall be given as much as possible in her own words, but briefly, for room must be found for several letters, now preserved in the British Museum, from the parties chiefly concerned, which have not been published before.

> "Lady Mary's marriage was an affair conducted in the old-fashioned manner: overtures being made by Lord Coke's relations to hers . . . and the bargain finally struck for £2,500 p.a. jointure, as the fair equivalent for her £20,000."

The Duchess of Argyll did not like the match, on account of "Lord Leicester's notoriously violent and dissolute character." But Lady Mary chose to accept it, though up to the time of the wedding (April, 1747) she treated her future husband with the utmost disdain, and appearance of dislike.

Horace Walpole's account of the engagement is amusing:

> "It was all negotiated by Countess of Gower,[1] and Lady Leicester. They drew the girl to give her consent, . . . but now, La Belle n'aime troop le Sieur Leandre. She cries her eyes to scarlet. He is so in love, he writes to her every other day. 'Tis a strange match. After offering him to all the lumps of gold in all the alleys of the City, they fish out

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[1] Lady Leicester's sister.

a woman of quality with a mere £12,000. She objects to his loving none of her sex but the 4 Queens in a pack of cards, but he promises to abandon Whites, and both Clubs, for her sake."

Lady Louisa describes the wedding and what came of it:

> "To the altar she went, and there uttered the irrevocable 'yes' and submitted to be sacrificed. But—*but*—a circumstance awkward to hint at, is the main hinge of the story. But rumour whispered that the sacrifice remained incomplete. To speak out, the bridegroom, who conceived he had a long score of insolence to pay off, was determined to mortify the fair bride by every means in his power. . . . He found, he said, her ladyship in the mood of King Solomon's Egyptian captives, 'Darting scorn and sorrow from her eyes': prepared to become the wretched victim of abhorred compulsion. Therefore, coolly assuring her she was quite mistaken in apprehending any violence from him, he begged she would make herself quite easy, and wished her a very good night."

This fatal beginning was but the prelude to disaster upon disaster, and the pair led a cat-and-dog life.

No one can defend Lord Coke, but, in truth, Lady Mary was half crazy, "invincibly wrongheaded," as Lady Louisa says, and determined to play the victim. Why, in a letter to Lady Suffolk, five years before, when she was a young girl, she had written such nonsense as this:

> "If one could believe what Lady Betty says of Inverary, that every care is banished from that happy place, I think, dear Lady Suffolk, we must both go there, for it's the only place I ever heard of that was beyond the reach of care, nor did I hope to find it on this side of the grave."

Pretty well for a mere child of fourteen!

Three months after the marriage, they were all to go to Holkham, and start early in the morning, but Lord Coke was still at the tavern. Lord and Lady Leicester took their daughter-in-law's part, and, as she admitted, were kind to her at Holkham, and very angry with their son. Lord Leicester afterwards wrote her a long letter which shows him in a very favourable light. Lord Coke and Lady Mary had now been for some time in London.

"*1st Jan.* 1747/8.
"HOLKHAM.

"DEAR MADAM,

"The behaviour of Lord Coke gives me so much uneasiness chiefly on your account, that I cannot help trying to disculpate the rest of the Family from anyways countenancing or even tolerating such behaviour in him, and I do promise you that was it not upon your account . . . I would never see him more. . . . From his beastly behaviour before he was married I had my fears he would relapse . . . but he told me he had confessed his folly to you and Lady Betty,[1] and I thought that sufficient proof he would not be guilty again . . . He will allow me to have been the most indulgent and kindest Father to him, but I find instead of mending, he has even been worse since he came to town, and therefore I own I have very little hopes of him . . . but I make this one more effort to reclaim him. . . ." (He feels for her as a father and will always protect her, and he can answer for Lady Leicester.)

"I wish I could say anything entertaining from this lonely place, after so serious a letter, to divert you, but I only converse with trees. The great Mr. Brettingham is gone to Town, so if Lord Strafford has a mind to talk to him about his plan, he will find him there at my house. . . .

"Your most loving Father, friend and Servant
"LEICESTER.

"I heartily wish you a happier New Year."

Lord Hartington had been trying to induce his friend Coke to alter his behaviour, and Lord Leicester sent him a letter of thanks which is very valuable, for its expressions of concern about Lady Leicester show that Lady Bute's belief that he had been an unkind and tyrannical husband was, to say the least, exaggerated. It is preserved among the papers at Chatsworth, and the Duke of Devonshire kindly allows me to print portions of it:

"MY DEAR LORD,

"I am exceedingly obliged to you for your goodness to me and my family. I own it will be with great reluctance whenever I come to town and the more so because I see I am wanted on Ld. Coke's account. It is not for my own sake to prevent trouble or vexation to myself, for I am so well prepared for all that may happen in relation to Ld. Coke, and can reason so Philosophically upon it, (as I am not the first who has seen their family undone by the vices of a son) that whatever dos happen will give me no more uneasiness than wt. has, for I have long foreseen his courses must end in his ruin. The unwillingness I have to come is on account of Ly. Leicester. She cant bear as I can the evills her son has drawn on himself, and he has already almost broke her heart, wch. is the greatest grudge I bear him. Here she is quiet and recovers her spirits, I have kep't from her knowledge his last most enormous behaviour, & I wd. for her sake even confine myself for ever in the country, rather than she sd. undergo those griefs she has had for her ungratefull son, & whenever I come to town, she will certainly come to the knowledge of all. . . . However I may seem to the world, I assure you, & my son knows it very well, my whole happiness is wrapt up in her, who has ever behaved so well to me, & therefore I had rather see all the misery happen to Ld. Coke wch. he has drawn on himself & consequently deserves, than that she sd. suffer the least part of the Pangs his ungratefull behaviour has caused her. . . . Should I now hurry away, she would have her alarms again, as she knows I have no business to call me to town but his, & we have fixt staying till next full moon, & had sent to our neighbours to make our last visits this week, which if put off, she'll guess at the cause . . & in spite of all we can do, be confirmed in it by what she will hear at London. I will therefore take a reasonable time to prepare for my journey without alarming her, & in the course of this week, pretend to be quite tired of the country, & set out for London without giving her any alarm. . . . As I have never yet been wanting in doing all that even a childish tender father could do to make him happy, I will not now drop him, when there appear signs of amendment in him, but his very worthy good & deserving mother must be first consider'd; therefore tho' I don't immediately set out as I otherwise should, I will the end of this week, & immediately begin to prepare Ly. Leicester that I may do it without giving her suspicion.

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[1] Lady Betty Campbell, afterwards married to Mr. Mackenzie.

"I cannot end this without expressing the greatest acknowledgments to you for all your goodness, & am very sure if my family is saved at all, it is entirely owing to you, for I know none but you could have brought him into the way of thinking he was when he left this place. . . .

"Your most faithfull & Obliged humble Servt.

"LEICESTER.

"HOLKHAM,
"*Janry.* 31*st*/1747/8."

Lady Mary acknowledged that Lord Leicester had behaved well to her. Among the Suffolk Papers in the British Museum, there is a fragment, docketed "Lady Mary Coke to Lord Leicester," which shows this:

"MY LORD,

"It is with great reluctance, that I may not appear ungrateful for those many proofs of your tenderness and goodness to me, that I find myself obliged to give you the uneasiness (in pursuance to your command) of knowing that my lord's behaviour since his engagement to your Lordship has not been such, I much fear, as you can approve. . . ."

But alas, alas! these good dispositions were soon to be entirely altered. Lady Mary had made up her mind, no doubt in revenge for the slight she had suffered after her wedding, but also, one must in fairness acknowledge, because her husband was really a brute, that never, never would she cohabit with him as a wife.

Poor Lord Leicester's heart was set upon an heir, and when he discovered the true state of the case, he lost command of himself. Lady Louisa says:

> "One day Lord Leicester arrived in a furious passion, turned some relations of his own who were sitting with her out of the house, railed at her pride and stubbornness, told her that Lord Coke had done her great honour in marrying her, in short, raved like a madman. Nevertheless, through Archibald, Duke of Argyll's mediation, a kind of truce was made; Lady Mary, much indisposed, had permission to live 2 or 3 months at her mother's house in Bruton St., while Lord Coke, also ill, resided with his parents. . . . He often called to see her, but was always refused. . . . Her uncle pressed Lord Leicester to let the ill-matched pair be separated, but neither father nor son would hear of it."

They still hoped, it should seem, that Lady Mary might relent, with a view to an heir. When the temporary separation was at an end, it was proposed that Lady Mary should go to drink the waters at Sunninghill, recommended by Dr. Mead, and her sister, Lady Betty (shortly to be married to Mr. Mackenzie), was to go too. A letter from Lady Betty to Lady Suffolk shows us that Lord Leicester was now trying to be more civil:

> "The Duke of Argyll was with Lady Mary yesterday: he told her that Lord Leicester was in Lord Coke's Dressing Room, but would not come up if she had any dislike to see him; she told the Duke she had not, so he brought him up, he stay'd about half an hour and was mighty civil, and said he hoped Lady Mary did not think it was for want of respect to her that he and Lady Leicester had not waited on her sooner, but he thought in the low weak way he was told she was in, she might have an objection to his Coming. . . ."

Lord Coke's behaviour at Sunninghill was, if possible, worse than ever. He alternated fits of remorse and professions of affection with conduct of the most violent kind. Horace Walpole, who had by this time given him up, said, "he is always drunk and has lost immense sums at play"; and declared that he was "at least an out-pensioner of Bedlam, his mother's family have many of them been mad."

In his introduction to "Lady Mary Coke's Journals" (vol. i., p. cxxv), the Hon. J. A. Home has printed a long letter from Lady Mary to her sister Lady Dalkeith, which recounts the horrors of that Sunninghill visit. But the following letter of Lady Betty Campbell to Lady Suffolk has not been printed, so it shall tell the story here:

"Dear Madam,

"I'm obliged to take this way of conveying a letter to your ladyship as every one I send by the Post is open'd, of which I have had proof, as Lady Sackville could tell you. Lady Mary wishes extreamely to see you, and that soon, as she is quite uncertain how short a time she may stay here; for about three days ago, as I left Lord Coke & Lady Mary together, while I went to finish a letter,—he took that opportunity to abuse her in such a manner, that notwithstanding all you know, I believe will surprise you; and among other things he told her she was certainly to set out for Norfolk on Monday next. She told him she had yet drunk the waters not above ten days which she fancy'ed could not have been of much use to her, he said he did not care for that, she should go next Monday: now she hopes to see you before that day, as she thinks she shall never return. Of Friday Lord Coke is to be in Town, and if its convenient to you, I think that would be the best day for seeing Lady Mary, as she wants your advice about several things and I may not have it in my power to write again, as I may possibly be sent away at an hour's warning . . .

"Your obt. humble Servt.

"Eliza Campbell."

One of Lord Coke's friends, Sir Harry Bellenden, brother to the beautiful Miss Bellenden, afterwards Duchess of Argyll, visited the unhappy pair at Sunninghill, and was so shocked at the treatment of Lady Mary, that his remonstrances to Lord Coke resulted in a duel. A memorandum of this affair is among the Chatsworth Papers:

"Harry Ballenden dined a few days since with Lord Coke & his Lady, when His Lordship threatened very hard what He would do to her for her Behaviour to him. She said, He could do nothing worse than he did. He replied, I'll think. His Lordsp. & Ballenden sat drinking all the evening & His Lordsp. reviving his threats, &c. B. said, His Lordship would certainly do well to consider what he did, because Lady Coke was greatly allied, & had Relations who would not see her ill used. Ld. Coke went out of the Room, & sent for his Pistols, & asked B. if he would exchange a pistol, who not imagining His Lordsp. to be in ernest, put it off with a jest, but hearing next day that Lord Coke had reflected upon him, as if he had declined a challenge, thought it incumbent upon him to find out Lord Coke (who was at Sunning

Hill or somewhere thereabouts) & carrying with him a brace of pistols, told him his errand, & the Occasion, & asked His Lordship if he would exchange a pistol with him. They chose seconds, and discharged one pistol a piece at each other. Ld. Coke then discharged another, or was going to discharge another, when B. snap'd his second pistol which missed Fire. The seconds then interposed, and prevented farther mischief. They were neither of them hurt. I may have mistook some Circumstances, but the Fact was certainly as above.

"28 *June*, 1748."

CHAPTER XXX

EDWARD VISCOUNT COKE AND HIS WIFE (*Continued*)

LORD COKE still, in his lucid intervals, tried to come to terms with his wife, who sends Lady Suffolk some extracts from a letter he had written to her:

> "MY DEAR LADY SUFFOLK,
>
> " . . . I had a letter last night from Lord Coke; he begins with saying that it is Dr. Mead's opinion that the swelling of my legs is of no consequence, but that however he wou'd have me omit the waters for a day and take some rhubarb; he next says that he won't trouble me with a long letter, tho' his heart is full, and he cou'd write to me very fully, but that he intreates me both for his sake and my own not to fling away both our happiness, that he'll forget even my marrying him with dislike; he then says let us not think of what is past, look forward and try at least not to be miserable, be assured I Love you, I would not have undergone what I have on your account if I did not, and so concludes. I imagine he will be at home to-night. . . .
>
> "Yr. most obliged & obt. Servant,
>
> "M. C.
>
> "*June 20th*, 1748."

Having survived the duel, Lord Coke took his wretched wife to Holkham, where Lord and Lady Leicester were installed in the Family Wing of their great new house, beautiful with the finest results of Kent's taste and Marsden's carving, rich but never heavily rich, and, above all, dignified. Here, in a charming room, newly hung with yellow damask, and well furnished—it is a complete "apartment" of three rooms and a maid's room—Lady Mary was destined to remain for more than a twelvemonth, making a martyr of herself. No excuse can be thought of for her husband, but, in truth, she brought her misery upon herself.

Lady Louisa says:

> "Lord Leicester and Lord Coke were firmly resolved to master her refractory spirit, her ladyship equally resolute not to be overcome. . . . She retreated to the citadel of her own apartment, and declared herself too ill to leave it: which the Leicesters, discrediting, regarded as a pretext adopted to cast odium upon them, and excite compassion in the neighbourhood. I own I have heard old Lady Cecilia Johnstone

say, that when she and her sister Lady Diana Clavering (then young ladies) were at Holkham with their father, Lord Delawarr, Lady Mary used to invite them up to her room, and be very merry, and, to all appearances, very well, though muffled in a night-cap and sick-dress, and refusing to associate with the family. For some months she persisted in thus secluding herself, nor could the medical men ever prevail on her to stir out of doors, or breathe the fresh air—a way of life which, with fretting and vexation, brought on real and nervous disorders."

Her letters are full of woe. Here is one to her sister Lady Strafford:

"For me, life is become a burden. 'tis now above three months since I was out of my Room, and during that time I think I have not known what it was to be one day free from some complaint, nor have I seen a human creature excepting the apothecary. Once my Lord Orford, and last Wednesday I had the pleasure of seeing Mr. William Campbell. I am neither able nor willing to say more, since I have only distresses to relate. . . ."

To Lady Betty, now married to the fascinating Mr. Mackenzie, her tone is much more tragic:

"My dear Lady Betty,

"The Bearer (whose fidelity I can never sufficiently commend) I think can inform you of everything you will want to know. My intention in troubling you with these few lines is to implore your assistance for the most wretched Being in the World, for God Almighty's sake take compassion on your unhappy Sister: Something sure might be done to alleviate my Misery. The Duke of A. and Lady Suffolk I have great dependance on, having so often experienced their goodness—I should think if you and Mr. Mackenzie wou'd join your interest, with theirs, sure you would be able to prevail upon the Dutchess to do something for her most unhappy Daughter.

"If my friends should think, of acting anything in my favour, for God's sake let it be done soon, for I am now so ill, delays wou'd be dangerous. . . . I shall only add that I have great reason to suspect they think my illness too ling'ring. I need not explain further what kind of assistance I wish to receive. . . . Adieu my dear Lady Betty, once more I beg you to think on my dreadful situation and rescue me from it."

Her sister's replies evidently did not please this poor, silly, self-made martyr, and she writes again to Lady Betty:

"Your letter afflicted me greatly by giving me to understand you was not that warm friend which I once thought you. . . . I am sorry to say that after having been above a twelvemonth in this place, and during the greatest part of that time suffering under all the misery and hardship that could be inflicted on the greatest criminal, that I have the mortification to find that my friends (or at least those that call themselves so) should have attempted nothing in my favour. There is a proverb, Lady Betty, that says 'Nothing is impossible to a willing mind.' . . .

"*July* 16, 1748."

To Lady Suffolk she writes a string of similar complaints.

Lady Suffolk replies, counselling moderation, begging Lady Mary not to think her sisters unfeeling, for "all letters sent to you require circumspection, and I must insist that you suspend all hard thoughts and reflections, and not add imaginary to real distresses"; and in a further letter she gives Lady Mary some very sound advice, recommending her to make a business-like statement of the ill-treatment she has received, in prospect of a legal action, but hints that her refusal of conjugal rights gives her enemies a strong case against her:

"You know, dear Madam, there is one subject of complaint against you, and in the Eye of the Law a very strong one: and as it is by no means impossible or improbable, that there may be an attack, it is absolutely necessary that you should be prepared to answer in your justification; for this purpose, recollect and make abstracts of every particular mark of unkindness after your return to your House, at Sunning Hill, and where you now are, till the time you was prest to have but one apartment, these according to my information, wou'd account for your apprehensions and consequent refusal of it. As you make any abstracts, lodge them in a safe hand, and be very particular in your next to your friend of your present treatment."

But Lady Mary is offended by Lady Suffolk's frankness, and replies to her kind letter very stiffly.

At length Lord Leicester permits his daughter-in-law to write to her uncle, the Duke of Argyll, and she makes the best use of her opportunity:

"MY LORD,

"I believe your Grace knows I shou'd be very unwilling to apply to Justice was it possible for me to bear the ill usage I meet with, but indeed, My Lord, it is now too much, as I live in constant fears and apprehension—I most humbly beg your Grace's assistance for your unfortunate Neice. . . . Lord Leicester has permitted me to write to Yr. Grace and intends to inclose my letter in one of his . . . I suppose his Lordshs. account will differ very much from mine, tho' I assure yr. Grace I shall relate nothing that is not true. Lord Coke has accused me of endeavouring to get him murdered, and told me (before his

Father and their Clergyman) that to his knowledge Mr. Bellenden came to tell me of the Duel the night before: they took my key, my Lord, and searched all my things, and opened a box my sister sent me—after this Lord Coke abused me, in the most cruel manner, but, not content with that he struck me on my Arm, tore my ruffle all to pieces, and told me I deserved to be assassinated. What he would have proceeded to I can't pretend to say, for the Clergyman (who I mentioned before) held him from me. I then told them that I must try whether justice would not deliver me from their cruelties which Lord Coke answered by saying that his Father and the Clergyman would not be witnesses against him, but I turned to My Lord Leicester and implored it of him, but I did not find he had more compassion than his son, for he took that opportunity to assure me that Lord Coke loved me extreamly, and that I might be very happy. . . .

"Your Grace knows with what terrors I thought of coming to this place; I then foresaw the consequences which has [*sic*] accordingly happened, but I hope if ever there is anything to be done, Your Grace will be my friend, and I call God to witness I don't think myself safe here. . . . Yr. Grace's most obliged & obt. Servant,

"M. C.

"I am forbid writing to my Mother or my sisters, so I beg the favour of Your Grace to let them know I am alive."

But besides the Duke of Argyll, Mr. Mackenzie was really working on Lady Mary's behalf, and kept Lady Suffolk informed of his proceedings: "I intend to send a letter to Lady Mary by special messenger . . . she still continues to upbraid me with negligence and want of concern for her sufferings, God knows how unjust her suspicions are." His next, describing his efforts to induce the foolish old Duchess of Argyll to take a decided step to succour her daughter, is in welcome relief to the gloom of the preceding letters:

"Your ladyship has hitherto considered me in the light of an able Lawyer, but now you must likewise acknowledge that I am an eloquent Orator, since, by the force of my rhetorick, I have brought the Dutchess (the power of whose tongue we all know) to consent that I should acquaint Lady Mary that she intends to apply to Lord Coke for his permission to see her daughter. I believe I need not tell your Ladyship that I had occasion for all my eloquence to convince her of the necessity of her taking this step, and that the thread of our discourse was often interrupted by little episodes that her Grace threw in, such as *her going to see Wanstead in Queen Anne's time, her knowing Lord Cobham when he was Sir Wm. Temple,* and things of that sort, which to an Orator less skilled in the powers of rhetorick than I am, might have appeared something foreign to our subject, namely, her going to Norfolk in King George II's time."

Lady Louisa shall continue the narrative:

> "The Duchess, attended by Mr. Mackenzie and a Solicitor, went down to Holkham, demanded, before witnesses, to have access to her daughter, was refused it, made affidavit of the fact on her return to town, and obtained a writ of Habeas Corpus from the Judges, enjoining Lord Coke to produce his wife before them on the first day of term in November. Lady Mary, when brought up, swore the peace against him, and instituted a suit for divorce on the score of cruel usage. . . . I have often and often heard my mother describe the ceremony of Lady Mary's public appearance. The Court was crowded to excess. . . . Lady Mary came forth, feeble, in wretched plight, dressed almost in tatters, which the Leicesters maintained it was her good pleasure to wear, since her pin-money had never been withheld, and she had spent it as she thought proper. The mob, which was prodigious, pressing to gain a sight of her, broke the glass of her sedan-chair. '*Take care!*' said the tender husband, as he handed her out of it, '*My dearest Love, take care, and do not hurt yourself.*'"

Lady Louisa says that Lady Mary never could or would give definite information as to specific acts of which the Law could take cognisance.

Reclining on a couch, Lady Mary gave this comprehensive answer to all interrogations: "Never was any human creature treated as I have been."

"That we do not doubt, madam, but the law requires proof; will you please to enter into particulars?"

"It is enough to say that in every respect my usage was most barbarous."

"Cannot your ladyship state some one act on some one day?"

"Oh, a thousand acts every day."

Mr. Mackenzie had to inform Lady Suffolk:

> "Lady Betty is come home in very low spirits at her bad success, not being able to get anything out of the Person in question, notwithstanding she said all you ordered her. . . . Lady B. says she fell into a rage, and talkt so loud, she was afraid they might have been overheard. In short I believe I shall wash my hands of the affair, for I can be no further service to her, it is torment and vexation to myself. Adieu, dear Lady Suffolk, Lord help us, for I think 'tis all over with us."

He further obliges Lady Suffolk with a letter of a kind which makes one believe in his reputation as a very agreeable person:

"The Duke of Queensberry, the Earls of Dalkeith, and Strafford and Bute, with Gen^l Campbell, were to be at Doctor's Commons this morning. . . . I have heard nothing from Norfolk, but as I am a good Christian, I can even pray for my enemies; and I do most heartily pray that Coke may be taken out of this world as soon as possible, because it is grown so wicked a one, that it may, if he lives, hurt his morals. I may further add, as a good Scotch Presbyterian Sailor prayed to God to take the Boatswain (who was a very cruel fellow) out of this troublesome life, 'and when you have once got him, Good Lord,' says he, 'it's not my business whether you keep him, or make a present of him to the Devil.'

"Your Ladyship's most wicked Humble Servt.

"J. A. MACKENZIE."

What the world of Society in general thought about it all, may be gathered from dear Mrs. Delany, who, as a friend of Lady Gower (sister to Lady Leicester), might conceivably have heard that which would have led her to a more impartial judgment.

"Lady Nassau Paulet[1] is mad: she says she will murder her daughter, a girl about nine years old, her only child, for she has killed her brother! Lady Nassau's 2 sisters, Lady Leicester and Lady Gower are so much taken up with persecuting poor Lady Mary Cook, that they have no thought of their unhappy Niece. . . . Lady Mary has been cruelly treated by her strange Lord and his father (who perhaps will see what I write of him, for he examines all letters that pass, he will reap but little satisfaction from that employment, and like listeners, hear no good of himself) . . . she is at present in her vile husband's custody, confined in a little dark room up 2 pair of stairs . . . the worst I have heard of her is that her temper is not good."

If a good creature like Mrs. Delany believed such gossip about the unfeeling aunts and their niece, and about the little dark room upstairs, we may as well distrust all gossip at once. Lady Louisa admits that the Leicesters affirmed that Lady Mary perversely preferred the rooms to any other (they are charming rooms), in order to appear cruelly ill-used. When the cause came to a hearing, she adds, "It fell to the ground so completely as to leave Lady Mary at the mercy of her enemies . . . if they had not grown a little tired, perhaps a little ashamed of persecuting her further. Lord Hartington . . . offered himself as mediator, and the Leicesters consented to let her live at Sudbrook unmolested."

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[1] Lady Nassau Paulet, youngest sister of Lady Leicester.

Lord Leicester had, no doubt, given up all hope of reclaiming his son, but as Lord Coke's health seemed to improve, he hoped that "that Kennel of Bitches that expect his death may be disappointed." This ungallant expression escaped him in a letter to "Dear Harry," in which he speaks of a visit to Holkham from Mr. Pelham, the Prime Minister, who "gave me great pleasure in his approbation of what I am doing here, especially my house and Arch, and as we were brought up under the same Great Master, Kent, and I have a great opinion of Mr. Pelham's taste, it gave me great pleasure."

But Lord Coke's course of life brought him to his grave in 1753. He was only thirty-four. His father writes to the Duke of Devonshire to thank him for a kind letter about it:

> "We had but too much preparation to fortify ourselves against the last [misfortune], yet it could not but be very shocking when it came, besides the great grief of my Wife, who has always behaved in so good and tender a manner to me, I own it gives me so great concern that I cannot think of recovering my spirits, till she does in some manner her's."

Lord Coke died at Greenwich, but was buried at Tittleshall. No memorial of him was raised there until his now widowed mother repaired the omission in 1759. Perhaps his parents felt that at the time the less said about him the better.

* * * * *

So malignant Fate had her triumph. She saw to it that the fair morning of Thomas Coke's youth should come to an evening of distress and disappointment.

The great builders of the eighteenth century, while they enjoyed seeing each stone that was laid upon another, while they delighted in each nursling tree which they added to their plantations (as true gardeners delight still), they took thought for posterity in a way which we of the twentieth century know nothing about.

For whom, then, had Lord Leicester toiled to make Holkham one of the marvels of England, for whose sake had he sought reputation crowned with peerages? No son was there to inherit his stately home, and his dignities, and his vast possessions. All must now descend to a nephew, son of his sister

Ann, whose elopement with young Philip Roberts had caused him such distress when he heard about it in Sicily, in 1716. She had been forgiven, indeed, but who can measure the bitter feelings with which Lord Leicester was forced to realise that the son of that marriage must be, eventually, his heir? But though so stricken, he behaved like a gentleman, at once, about his nephew; is glad to hear that the Duke of Devonshire speaks well of him in Derbyshire, and writes at once to the Prime Minister to beg his influence that Wenman Roberts may be elected for Harwich. He would carry on his works, he would turn a brave face to the world; but no—nothing could ever be the same for him again. His wife seems never to have recovered from this sorrow. She had lost her son, her only son, and mothers love their sons, however contrary may be their course. They had probably been far too indulgent to this clever boy, and failed to curb the passionate temper which he inherited from his father. And now, all the father's hopes were shattered. Had Boswell known the story of Holkham, it would have given point to his observation that "grand houses and fine gardens were made upon the supposition of happiness," and Johnson's reply, "Alas, Sir, these are all only struggles for happiness!"

Lord Leicester's conduct towards his daughter-in-law was probably much exaggerated, for Horace Walpole was able to write, in 1752: "I now entirely credit all that my Lord Leicester and his family have said against Lady Mary Coke." But it cannot be denied that the difficult temper which had marred the otherwise fine character of the Chief Justice had reappeared in the most remarkable of his descendants. He had never brought it under proper control, and his unhappy son's training no doubt suffered in consequence.

CHAPTER XXXI

SIR THOMAS COKE, EARL OF LEICESTER—A GREAT WHIG NOBLEMAN

BUT even during those troubled years of the war with Lady Mary and the tribulation of his son's ill-conduct, Lord Leicester attended to business, and also to pleasure, corresponding gaily with his friends when he could not pay them visits. Next to the Dukes of Devonshire and Newcastle,[1] his chief ally seems to have been the Duke of Grafton,[2] for whom he had a nickname, "Baldassar," or the "Gran Corteggiano," in allusion to the famous author of the "Corteggiano," Baldassare Castiglione. On the other hand, His Grace retaliated by calling Lord Leicester "Trot."

In June, 1747, the Suffolk Election so engrossed the Duke of Grafton that he became for awhile completely lost to his friends, and Lord Leicester humorously tells the Duke of Newcastle that Baldassar may be considered as good as dead.

"EUSTON,
"*June* 20, 1747.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"It is w^th^ the greatest concern I inform yr. Grace of the loss of the poor Duke of Grafton; he is not dead but in so very bad a way that I dare say his death must be wisht by all who love him. Lost intirely to the High world and all his acquaintance, he will now be no longer a companion to yr. Grace or any Gentleman about the Court. Baldassar is turn'd Hob, and is more rusticated and a greater Bumkin than any in Suffolk, as appears by his having more interest there than any Squire among them, and still more by his out-boobying any of them in applying in the best booby manner for their votes and interest at Stowmarket, and wth. the greatest success. It is impossible after this he can ever appear bright enough again for yr. Grace's Company. Chesterfield will be sick at the sight of him and think himself turned Patriot again w^n^ he is in such bumkin Company. . . .

"LEICESTER."

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[1] Thomas Pelham-Holles (1693-1768), Prime Minister 1754-56, 1757-62.

[2] Charles, second Duke of Grafton, K.G. (1683-1757), grandson of King Charles II. by Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland.

On the same subject he writes to the Duke of Devonshire:

> "Holkham,
> "*July 5th*, 1747.
>
> "Happy & glorious ever victorious John,
>
> "As at Chess, so in the peoples love, I see you are successfull, I heartily wish you joy, and hope this last unsuccessfull attempt of your grand opposer Mr. Poole will prevent him from giving you any farther trouble, but let you reign in peace, the leader of Derbyshire. I am glad my Brother [Robert Coke, of Longford] has behaved so well, I begin to think our family have some Johnism about them, by the tendency they have towards the principal John, for however they may strive against it, the bias lays so strong on that side, that John still attracts us, as I see in my brothers case. I believe we had better follow nature and not kick agst. the Pricks, but be your humble servts. and worship thee, thou John of Johns. That little victory however that you got over me at Chess, while my thoughts were at Holkham, and I in such a hurry to get into the country, thou shalt dearly pay for, when I return satiated of my buildings and plantations here, and have my head clear enough for Chess. Mr. Hoyle (though I have not seen him since our journey) I suppose has hear'd wth. shame of your success agst. his scholar, for wch. reason he has sent me of his own accord several lessons wrote down wch. I will be perfectly master of before I come to town, and wth. them beat your whole Library of Chess books. We have not yet had time to think of them, our whole thoughts have been taken up wth. the good of our country in chusing able members to serve yt, as Mr. Wodehouse etc. etc. etc.
>
> "Your most devoted and obt. servant.
> "Leicester."

Mr. Hoyle's "Lessons on Chess" appear at the end of his book on "Piquet," which still remains at Holkham to show that he and Lord Leicester were master and pupil.

Lord Leicester was certainly a stanch Whig. This same year he writes to Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, begging him not to make Mr. Thornhaugh Gurdon and a Mr. Richard Ellis magistrates for Norfolk, as desired by Lord Townshend. He and his son Lord Coke would pray to be removed from the Commission if Mr. Ellis is put in. He writes not out of pique, for he has a good personal regard for Mr. Gurdon, "who is, privately, my friend, and his Father was also, but he and his family are most distinguished Tories."[1]

But though so strong a party man, he put public service before party, and justified the purity of his exercise of Post

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[1] The Gurdons became Whigs in later days, and Mr. Gladstone raised their representative to the Peerage as Lord Cranworth.

Office patronage to the Duke of Newcastle. When His Grace and the Duke of Dorset desired a *protégé* of theirs to succeed to some important post in that office, Lord Leicester dared to refuse them in order to promote a first-rate man already in the office: "I have a friend I much want to provide for, but before my private inclination I prefer His Majesty's service, by taking care to have offices under me well filled up, and not with favourites of my own."

In the diligent superintendence of his office as Postmaster there is abundant evidence that he was a careful and scrupulous administrator. In the continued confidence of friends such as the Duke of Devonshire and Lord Hartington, and in his building and planting, Lord Leicester may have found solace during the wretched period of his son's unhappy marriage. But in 1748 a severe blow fell upon him in the loss of his master and friend William Kent. No letters from him about this calamity have survived, but the British Museum preserves a fragment of a letter of condolence sent to him by Mr. Solomon Dayrolles, who says: "I was so intimately acquainted with Mr. Kent and so great an admirer of his talents, that I can't help lamenting his loss both for my own sake and that of my friends. The Duke of Grafton was the first Person that offered to my thoughts when I heard of his death, but since your Lordship has undertaken the surintendence of his Grace's Buildings and Gardens, I daresay that Euston will continue to improve as much as if our Poor Friend was alive."

The loss of Kent as architect would be of less importance than the loss of him as a friend, for the plans of Holkham had long been settled. But he had been both master and friend for thirty years, since the days of the young virtuoso's boyish experiences in Italy, and, whatever his faults may have been as regards Lady Mary—and she would have exasperated a saint—Lord Leicester was a man of truly affectionate nature, one who never forgot a friend. If all that his enemies charged him with about Lady Mary be true, it is a blot upon his fair fame. But to his credit let it be remembered that he was always anxious to help a friend, always ready to use his influence with the great on behalf of humbler acquaintances. Generous as a boy, he was generous to the end.

In October, 1749, the Lady Mary troubles were at their height, and Lord Leicester was putting the roof on to the main block of the new house at Holkham, but he finds time to ask the Duke of Newcastle for a prebend at Westminster or Windsor for his neighbour Mr. Nelthorpe, who married Mr. Hoste's sister; "if it can be granted, a favour will be done not only to the petitioner, but to those very considerable Norfolk families." He concludes: "I have seen nobody for a long time, and am quite taken up with covering in my house; I will have a warm apartment for you in hope of getting you here."

Two years later, the Duke is informed that Lord Leicester is now busy putting into practice the results of his annual studies at His Grace's house of Claremont, and improving Holkham from the hints he got there: "The Great Corteggiano [Duke of Grafton] and General Wall were here, they flattered me much, but I am not sure that 5 brace of partridges, killed in one day by his Grace's own hand, did not add more to the beauty of the place than all that Kent and I could do to it," though "he is one of the orthodox of our faith, and his approbation is what I value much." He hopes there will be no need to summon him to town for any political reasons: "I live here entirely the life of a Druid amongst my Trees."

But the Druid can take thought for the interests of the Tory town of Dereham, and the advantage of placing there a sound Whiggish parson. Mr. Crow, of Swaffham, for whom he has such a sincere kindness that he cannot refuse, begs him to pray the Duke of Newcastle to obtain from the King a lease of the Rectory of East Dereham, and the advowson, for thirty years. There is a lusty parson there at present, who might live that time, but even healthy men's lives are hardly valued at that, and Mr. Crow has a son whom he designs to breed a parson. So Lord Leicester writes to the Duke on Mr. Crow's behalf, and adds:

> "Dereham is the most Jacobite town in this county, and has many voters, and I hear one Dun is applying for it, which Dun I know nothing of, but all his relations have signalised themselves in the Tory cause. . . . Duke Baldassar and I often wisht for you here to see our works."

Lady Mary's partisans spoke of Lord Leicester's "ill-breeding," and to be violent and ill-tempered is certainly to be ill-bred, but it does not seem that in the ordinary tenor of his life he was anything but a gentleman. He behaved like one about this Mr. Donne (for that is the way to spell his name), though he probably never dreamed that Roger Donne's name would come to be as well known as his own. For the Rector of Catfield's sister was mother of the poet Cowper, who once wrote of his daughter Harriet: "She and I have been many a time merry at Catfield, and made the Parsonage ring with our laughter." Perhaps the poet was laughing there, while his uncle Roger was writing a disclaimer to Lord Leicester, assuring him that he was a proper Whig. He had evidently heard what Lord Leicester believed as to his principles.

> "In the year 1732, Bishop Baker, fully satisfied as to my zeal and affection for His Majesty, collated me to the Living of Catfield which I now enjoy. In 1734, the only time I have had opportunity of distinguishing my principles at a contested Election, the printed Poll will testify what I did then for your Lordship's brother and the present Sir Wm. Harbord. In the Parish of Catfield, but one vote was lost, and in that of Ingham where I am Curate, but half a one, though the Parishioners were strongly attacked by the Tory and Jacobite Party. . . . On the day of Election, I took care to see all my men poll, and entertained them and their horses at my own expense.
>
> "Yr. Lordship's most obedient
>
> "ROGER DONNE."

As soon as Lord Leicester gets Mr. Donne's[1] letter, he sends a copy of it to the Duke of Newcastle, "for I should think myself inexcusable if, to serve myself or a friend, I should misrepresent another through mistake, and not immediately set it right."

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[1] Nearly a hundred years after this letter was written, a great-grandson of the writer, Mr. William Bodham Donne, rendered a notable service to the descendants of Lord Leicester by composing the fine inscription for the column in Holkham Park erected in honour of Thomas William Coke, Earl of Leicester of the second creation (1754-1843). A letter which Mr. W. B. Donne wrote about this to his friend Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, is too good to be omitted from a book about the Cokes:

"*May* 11, 1848.

"I have written a work which will last a century, and may, probably, much longer. It is to be engraven in marble and imbedded in granite. A fig for such writers as you, who only use ink & paper! That the thought of my immortality may not perplex you too much . . . I add that it is an inscription for the late Lord Leicester's monument, and it will brave the winds & the rain in Holkham Park."

It should seem that the Duke could not grant the request about Mr. Crow, for in a few days Lord Leicester writes to assure him that the refusal shall not interrupt their friendship:

> "Ecce iterum Crispinus, I should not have troubled your Grace, had not that injurious Baldassar so stigmatised me with the name of Trot, that I feared you might think me one of those true great-spirited Englishmen who would fall out even with their best friends, if in anything they did not conform to his desires. I must thank you for your kind condescension in giving me such unanswerable reasons for not doing what I took the liberty to desire of you."

He goes on to say that his visit to Claremont proved that the Duke "kept equal paces with our Great Master Kent." He is labouring to get Holkham into proper order, hoping that he may not be ashamed of it when His Grace pays his promised visit. The Duke was now Chancellor of Cambridge University, and Lord Leicester says: "I trust that when you come to visit your schools of learning at Cambridge, you may be tempted to come on & visit the Schools of Kent at Euston and here, of which places, at least here, you shall have the direction, and be Chancellour."

Presently he writes to express a hope that public affairs will not soon call him to London, for he wishes to stay a few weeks longer, and see "finished under my own eye which alone I can trust, some principal parts here, which really raise so upon me, as to outdo my own expectations. I long to show them to your Grace, and flatter myself that by the Intermezzo of Cambridge and the Great Baldassar, my Guardian Angell, I shall have this happiness, for none but the Scuola of which you are can bear any great weight with me."

CHAPTER XXXII

SIR THOMAS COKE, EARL OF LEICESTER—LAST YEARS OF THE CREATOR OF HOLKHAM

IN the autumn of this year (1754) the Duke of Cumberland invited himself to Euston, and expressed a wish that Lord Leicester should be of the party; the Duke of Grafton accordingly wrote to his friend:

"*Tuesday, Oct.* 1.

"MY ANGELL TROTT,

"The Duke said to me yesterday, 'will not that extraordinary Gentleman meet us at Euston?' His Royal Highness will be there Saturday night or Sunday dinner, and will stay a day or two.

"Your slave,
"GRAFTON.

"(*Countersigned*) HARTINGTON."

Lord Leicester enclosed this remarkable invitation to the Duke of Newcastle to show that he had been called away from Holkham, and had not received the letter to which he now replies, for some days. The letter was directed, it seems, merely to "Trott" (His Grace of Grafton must surely have been in his cups when he wrote such an address), for Lord Leicester tells the Duke of Newcastle, "One of our clerks being with me at Holkham found out that 'Trott' and 'that extraordinary Gentleman' meant me, else I had missed the journey thither." So it looks as though his lordship's nickname of "Trot" was known at least to his clerks.

In Lord Leicester's letters to the third Duke of Devonshire, and his son Lord Hartington, who succeeded as fourth Duke in December, 1755, there is much that is interesting upon both private and public matters. This (the third) Duke was the subject of Dr. Johnson's often quoted tribute: "He was not of superior abilities, but was strictly faithful to his word. If, for instance, he had promised you an acorn, and none had grown that year in his woods, he would not have contented himself with that excuse. He would have sent to Denmark for it."

To Lord Hartington, now Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, he writes on behalf of his old friend Mr. Lee Warner, of Walsingham, whose son wants to go into the Army. Will His Excellency confer an Ensign's commission in a marching regiment, or a cornetcy of Dragoons, on the young man? Lord Leicester does not recommend the Guards, for " that would be a ready way to debauch and ruin him, from the idle and expensive ways of the young officers, and the temptations of London." Besides, he would prefer a regiment in Ireland, where he understands the discipline is better, the officers are more confined, and live more together. He will be as much obliged for this favour done for his friend, as if it were done for a son of his own.

When the favourable answer comes, Lord Leicester is overjoyed, and warmly thanks Lord Hartington, assuring him that a more grateful and worthy man than Mr. Lee Warner no one can oblige, and that the would-be Ensign's name is Thomas.

It was precisely the moment when, the country clamouring for Pitt, who refused to serve under the Duke of Newcastle, Lord Hartington, now fourth Duke of Devonshire, was summoned from Ireland to become Prime Minister, with Mr. Pitt as Secretary of State to manage the war. Lord Hartington communicated privately to Lord Leicester that there was a proposal made that he should become Premier, and Lord Leicester replied:

> " I have the utmost concern for the confused state the Nation is now in; I long foresaw it approaching, and I do not know anyone but yourself from whom we may have hopes of seeing things brought into any tolerable order. The many fast and true friends you have, the universal esteem and good opinion of all men, and of all parties, puts you in such a light, that if you can't restore order, no one can; so that for the King and Country's sake, every good man must wish to see you at the head . . . tho' they can't but be alarmed at thinking of the disagreeable scituation you must be in, by entering into so entire a new life, especially as you feel in yourself such a distaste for it, and I fear you will be able to find but few of sufficient credit to ease you of any great share of the burden. . . .
>
> " These difficulties considered, I do not know what to wish for in regard to yourself, tho' I have thought of nothing else since I received your letter. But indeed I am a very incompetent Judge of these matters, especially as my retirement from the world affords me little opportunity of knowing the present posture of affairs. . . ."

He writes again next year, to say his thoughts are melancholy about public affairs:

> "My only hope is in you, and my principal care is that you, who have so generously undertaken this hard task, may be able to go through with it with publick honour and private satisfaction, which, had you men in the least resembling yourself to co-operate with, you would certainly do. But to my grief I find (as far as I can judge at this distance) that what I formerly hinted proves too true, that those who gave such expectation of themselves are only tools of faction. I hope, however, your credit and candour may be able to stem these difficulties, or else (as they say Byng said to Cornwall) the Lord have mercy upon us!"

Lord Leicester took the severe view of Admiral Byng's conduct. Writing to Lord Hardwicke to say that the command of the Pacquet Boats should be entrusted to the mate, if the Captain should be called to command any of His Majesty's ships, he says:

> "I am much afraid the misbehaviour of Byng will not shorten the occasion there may be for the service on board his Majesty's ships, but I hope the Nation will at last have the satisfaction to see there are punishments for those that do amiss, as well as great rewards for others, and that the death of one poor unfriended Lieutenant will not be lookt upon as a sufficient excuse for many vast and shameful misbehaviours of so many of our fleet . . . .
>
> "Holkham,
> "*July* 26, 1756."

The hopes for the success of the Duke of Devonshire's ministry were not fulfilled. As Lord Leicester feared, he did not succeed in gathering round him a Cabinet of statesmen of his own calibre, and he resigned office in May, 1757, Pitt making up his differences with the Duke of Newcastle. Lord Leicester continues to correspond with him about an election at Harwich, and other matters, but says he prefers to politics his quiet retirement among his woods and buildings, and his "lonely Hermitage."

At the outbreak of the Great War, all Norfolk looked for a German landing at a place on the coast, not far from Holkham, called Weybourne. Norfolk had expected the Spaniards to land there at the time of the Armada. There was the same fear of attack at Weybourne in the Seven Years' War. Lord Leicester tells the Duke of Devonshire: "Now the French have got Ostend and Newport, it will be no very long traject for them to make a visit to your brother Walpole[1] at Weyburne Loop. Marechal Mirepoix, I think, commands the coasts in France, il nous fera bonne chère, sed non est ludendum cum sacris, and some things may be too true to make a joke of."

In 1758 the Government brought in a Militia Bill which was strongly opposed by many prominent Whigs, who dreaded the force getting into the hands of the Tory and Jacobite party.

Lord Leicester's opposition to it, as is believed, cost him his life. In the winter of this year, he made in public, or was alleged to have made, some depreciatory remarks about the Militia, and his Tory neighbour Colonel George Townshend, afterwards the first Marquis Townshend, sent him a challenge. Lord Leicester declined the duel in a dignified letter. This was in January, 1759; but on April 29 he was dead, and rumour asserted that he had died of wounds inflicted by Colonel Townshend. That arch-gossip, the Rev. Mr. Pyle, in a letter to his friend, Mr. Kerrich, Rector of Dersingham, writes as if the facts were well known, but this one letter affords the only documentary corroboration of the story of the duel that has come to light up to the present. Another story, which rests only on tradition, is to the effect that Colonel Townshend, determined on revenge for Lord Leicester's sarcasms about the Militia, rode over from Rainham to Holkham, and waylaying Lord Leicester, discharged a pistol at him with results which in a few weeks proved fatal. However this may have been, the truth seems to have been very successfully hushed up. Neither Horace Walpole nor Mrs. Delany have anything to say about it, and the correspondence of several of Lord Leicester's more intimate friends has been searched without success.

There is a melancholy interest in reading a passage in one of Lord Leicester's letters to the Duke of Devonshire, just twelve months before the tragedy:

> " I hope you had enough of the Militia in your country: what must it be that could make the people rise against one of the Cavendish family, especially your Grace. I shall send my proxy as usual to John Delawarr, with directions to oppose any clause of that foolish Bill, as also the import of Irish Cattle, to export troops to Germany, and a fleet

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[1] The Duke's sister, Lady Rachel, had married Horatio Walpole, second Lord Walpole of Wolterton.

to the Baltick. Without being a Coxcomb, I am sure these Politicks are right."

The Duchess Dowager of Devonshire had stayed at Holkham during the summer of 1758, and also the Duke of Cumberland, and Lord Leicester paid what must have been his last visit to Chatsworth, going from thence to Longford to stay with his nephew and heir, Wenman Roberts, who had assumed the name of Coke. It was like what we know of him to forgive his sister's son for being the heir instead of a child of his own. We remember how manfully he got over his youthful disappointment about going with the Austrians to fight the Turks. He might have cherished a grudge against his nephew Wenman—such behaviour has not been unknown in other families—but instead of that, he makes the best of it, and is on cordial terms, using his influence to get his nephew elected to Parliament, introducing him to the Prime Minister, and visiting him at his home. This last visit to Longford was forty-seven years after the first. Memories of his boyish sports there, of Mr. Wilkins the tutor, of Mrs. Chaney who wouldn't allow him to shoot near the house, of his kind old cousin Sir Edward Coke—what memories must have risen during this last visit, when, though he knew it not, the shadow of death was already gathering over his head.

In October he is back at Holkham, having taken Cambridge on his way, and writes the last which has been preserved of the long series of letters to his friend the Duke of Newcastle. It is very long, mainly about the difficulties of the Harwich Election, and the fatal Militia, but is cheerful enough. Whether the poetical description of that force as it appeared in Norfolk is a specimen of Lord Leicester's powers of versification, I cannot be sure, but I suspect it is. The new building at Cambridge was the eastern façade of the University Library, and Gray wrote to Mason (June 20, 1758): "That old fizzling Duke of Newcastle is coming here again to hear speeches in his new library." Mr. Pickford was the statuary who had executed much of the carving at Holkham.

" . . . I am grieved not to see you here, and fear you'll never take this long journey, I saw your new building at Cambridge; wd. it were taller, but Pickford's festoons are as fine as can be made.

"If I am informed right by 2 Gentlemen from Suffolk, yr Militia begins well; at a place called Southwold (they say) an Heroick Captain called out his Company, and to cheer their hearts, treated them with good old English beer. The Heroes in Gratitude toasted their noble Captain, then King James the 3rd . . . how they'll do here I know not, but by what I have seen of the list there are many if not most officers who never shewed in peace much zeal for this Government. In Arms I doubt not but they will. Whatever you may hear, I must for the honour of my county assure you it is not popular here, as I believe the next Election will show, notwithstanding newspaper puffs.

" As for news,

The country rings around with loud alarms
And Raw in fields the Rude militia Swarms;
Mouths without hands maintained at vast expence,
In peace a charge, in War of no defence.
Stout once a month, they march a blustring Band,
And ever, but in times of need, at hand.
Of seeming Arms they make a short Essay,
Then hasten to be drunk, the business of the day.

" LEICESTER."

This last letter to the Duke of Devonshire is dated November 12, 1758, and its conclusion reminds one of days and nights in 1914 when the sound of great guns was not infrequently reported as heard at Holkham:

" . . . I will trouble you no more at present, except to acquaint you that yesterday from one of the clock at noon till near twelve at night, we heard a very violent firing of very large guns at sea to the N.W. of this place, seemingly off Lynn. I hope it may be some great ship of ours attacking the Belle Isle privateer: probably the Admiralty will have some account of it, for the guns seem to be large, and many broadsides which came quick, and then long intermissions, so probably a running fight, though the noise seemed nearly in the same place, or else they slowly came this way, as there was very little wind at west.

" Your Grace's most obdt. and faithfull humble servt.

" LEICESTER."

Lord Leicester died on April 29, 1759. Perhaps it will never be certainly known whether by a natural death, or as the result of an encounter with Colonel Townshend. His death was referred to by his clerk of the works, Brettingham, as " sudden," but if there had been a duel, the result was not immediately fatal, for Colonel Townshend had sailed for America some weeks before Lord Leicester's death.

That he had been ill in the preceding year is certain, for

Lady Leicester says so in a letter to the Duke of Newcastle. That Colonel Townshend sent him a challenge, which was declined, is also certain. Mrs. Stirling has printed the letters in her "Coke of Norfolk and his Friends." When Mr. Pyle ("Letters of a Royal Chaplain") says, "Lord Leicester is dead . . . I wish his antagonist were in the shades . . .," he may be referring only to the controversy between them and the challenge; he does not mention a duel, but it does seem as if there had been a personal encounter of some sort which aggravated Lord Leicester's already enfeebled health, and, in truth, hastened his death. Had there been a regular duel, or a wayside discharge of a pistol, it is difficult to believe that all evidence should have been suppressed. His body was laid to rest in the family dormitory on the north side of Tittleshall Church.

His wife raised a great monument to his memory in the chancel, adorning it with twin busts of her lord and herself, in marble, by Roubiliac. The monument has three panels, in the centre is inscribed:

> "Thomas Coke, of an ancient and honourable line, descended from Edward, Lord Chief Justice Coke, and allied to many noble families, by his extraordinary endowments added lustre to his Birth, and received the most conspicuous marks of Royal Favour and Affection, being created Knight of the Bath by King George the First, Baron of Minster Lovell, Viscount Coke of Holkham, and Earl of Leicester, by His Majesty King George the Second, to whose Persons, Honor, and Government He was always, with the highest gratitude, most zealously attached."

Lady Leicester had not forgotten her first-born. His father had granted him the honour of sepulture at Tittleshall, but had raised no memorial of him. Now the poor mother could act according to the promptings of her heart, and in the east panel she wrote:

> "His Lordship married the third daughter of Thomas, Earl of Thanet, the Lady Margaret Tufton, by descent from the Earls of Cumberland, Baroness of Clifford, by whom, besides several children, who all died young, he had Edward, Lord Viscount Coke, who represented this county, and distinguished himself in two Parliaments by a ready conception, strong Memory, and a most peircing [*sic*] judgment. He married the youngest daughter of John, Duke of Argyll, Lady Mary Campbell, by whom he had no issue."

The remaining panel records that—

> "Margaret, Dowager Countess of Leicester preserving inviolable the most perfect impressions of conjugal and parental affection, caused this Monument to be erected to the memories of her husband, and her son Edward, in the year 1760. The former died at Holkham, April 20, 1759, aged 61, the latter died at Greenwich August 30th, 1753, aged 34."

In accordance with her expressed wishes, only a small panel was added to state that Lady Leicester died the 28th of February, 1775, in the 75th year of her age.

"C. Atkinson, Londini, fecit," is engraved on the tomb. Messrs. Atkinson were the contractors for all the marble work done at Holkham, so it was natural that the tomb should be ordered from them. Lord Leicester left his estates to his wife for her life; they were then to pass to his nephew Wenman, son of his sister Ann, who had eloped with Phillip Roberts in 1715-16.

* * * * *

Lord Leicester was a remarkable man, but he was the victim of a hot and undisciplined temper, and when he gave rein to it, as in the case of his daughter-in-law, he forgot his duty as a gentleman. This temper was inherited from the Chief Justice, whose conduct to Essex and Raleigh has never been forgotten or forgiven. But with this exception, Lord Leicester's character, if not his prudence, seems to have been excellent. It is true that at one time he practised what Dr. Johnson called "the lighter vices," but if he did dally with pretty Fannys, "it was only pretty Fanny's way." In spite of Lady Bute, who was a biassed witness, he was quite a good husband, I dare say, to Lady Margaret. Because a wife is quiet and reserved, it does not follow that her husband beats her. His letters give fair evidence that he appreciated her worth. He was an honest and industrious public servant, a kind and civil neighbour, ever ready to oblige, and certainly not arrogant to the Norfolk squires and clergy. That he was a man of scholarly and cultivated mind, his library remains to show, and if he gambled at cards, he was enthusiastic about chess. That persons of such deserved reputation as the two Dukes of Devonshire and Lord Hardwicke were his intimate friends is much in his favour. To Admiral Boscawen he was the "fat, laughing, joking Peer"—no bad testimony to his social character. In regard to his achievements in architecture and virtuosity, his works remain to declare his worth.

But as a landlord he has not had his due meed of praise; and since to change an "open, barren estate" into a rich agricultural province is a more worthy title to fame than the building of the most splendid palace, the agricultural advance made during Lord Leicester's tenure of his estates must be specially noted. It has been suggested that the Norfolk land was quite unprofitable and ill-cultivated when Lady Leicester died. For instance, a certain modern guide book informs us that Holkham, once a barren, dreary expanse, has been converted into wide stretches of fertile pastures and woodland by the famous agriculturist "Coke of Norfolk," otherwise Thomas William Coke, Earl of Leicester; that on succeeding to the estate in 1776 he found it a sandy waste on which little besides grass would grow. How far this is from the truth may be learnt from Mr. Arthur Young's description of the rich farming in and about Holkham which he made and published in 1768, eight years before Thomas William Coke succeeded to the estates. I shall quote from the third edition of Young's famous "Tour," and it will then be seen that it was Thomas Coke, first Earl of Leicester, under whose rule the transformation was effected.

"All the country from Holkham to Houghton was a wild sheepwalk, before the spirit of improvement seized the inhabitants, and this spirit has wrought amazing effects: for instead of boundless wilds and uncultivated wastes, inhabited by scarcely anything but sheep, the country is all cut into enclosures, cultivated in a most husband-like manner, richly manured, well peopled and yielding an hundred times the produce it did in its former state. What has wrought these great works is the marling, for under the whole country run veins of a very rich kind, which they dig up, and spread upon the old sheepwalks, and then by means of inclosing, they throw their farms into a regular course of crops, and gain immensely by the improvements. The farms are large, and the rents low, for the farmers having been at great expenses in improvements, they could not afford them without very long leases: so that most of the farms are let at present much under their value; add to this a considerable part of the country belongs to landlords who have a vanity in not raising their rents, and others are supposed to have taken moderate fines: all together, the farmers have managed to raise considerable fortunes. The farms run from £300 to £900 a year, for which sums they have a great quantity of land; rents in general are from 2/6 to 6/- per acre . . . I speak of a large tract of country stretching from Holkham to the sea westward, or South to Swaffham . . . the farmer generally has

100 acres of winter corn
250 „ barley and oats
50 „ pease
200 acres of turnips
400 „ grasses.
100 „ sheepwalk.

He keeps

6 servants
6 labourers
30 horses
20 cows
900 sheep
5 ploughs."

Now we know, from Lord Leicester's tablet over the entrance to his marble hall, that he found his estate "open and barren." He succeeded to it in 1707, and for many years from that date it was under the care of his admirable steward, Humphrey Smith (p. 166). Then came Mr. Cauldwell, who was, alas! a dishonest agent, but who must have been very capable indeed. He had raised the income, he said, from £7,741 in 1741 to £13,493 in 1776, and yet Mr. Young shows that the rents were low in 1768. The farmers, the rich farmers, bribed Mr. Cauldwell to keep them low.

From all this testimony of Arthur Young, it appears that, Humphrey Smith and Mr. Cauldwell being the active agents, it was Thomas, first Lord Leicester, who

> "Scattered plenty o'er a smiling land,"

and that his great-nephew, Thomas William Coke, did but continue to improve what had already been brought to a high state of efficiency. Honour where honour is due. Mr. Young estimated that one of these Norfolk farmers, on a medium of prices and seasons, enjoyed a net profit of near £1,300 a year, and added, "I have no doubt but that £1,300 has some years been carried to near £3,000."

The yeoman of Norfolk erected no column to commemorate the agricultural efforts of the first Earl, as they did in the case of his successor. But had they erected a monument to the man under whose rule the sheepwalks had been changed into a country which gave tenant-farmers £1,300 to £3,000 a year, besides building the house which is one of the stateliest in England, they would have been amply justified in so doing.

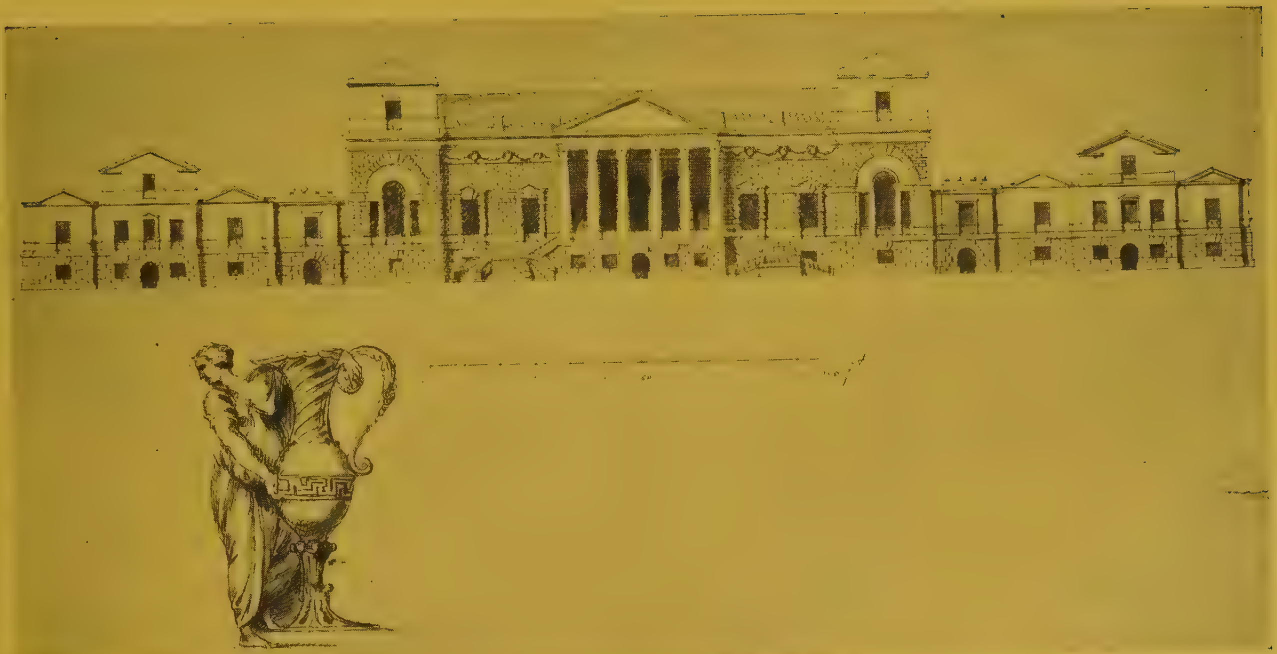
CHAPTER XXXIII

HOLKHAM—BUILDING AND DECORATION

OF Margaret, Lady Leicester, and her sixteen years' reign over Holkham, something shall be said presently. But first our somewhat long-deferred account must be given of Holkham itself—the great house and park which were her lord's chief work in life, and the monument by which he is chiefly known to posterity.

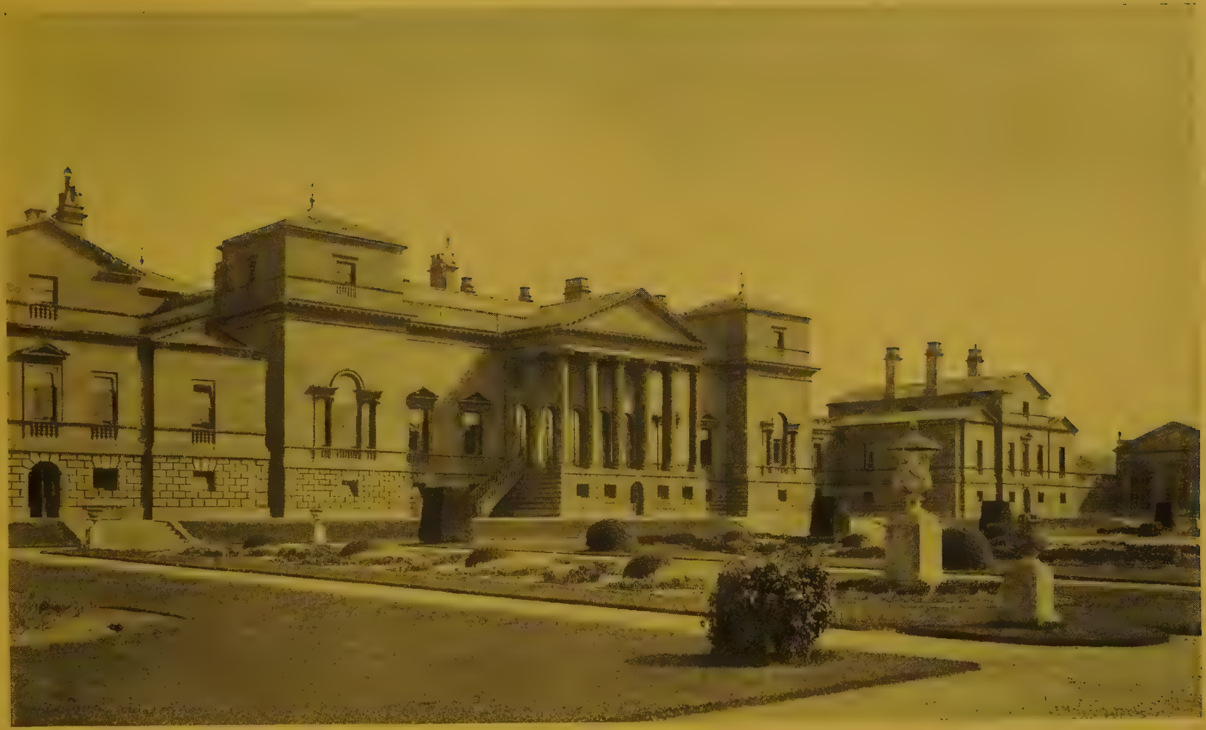
It will be remembered that a large portion of the parish of Holkham and the adjacent parish of Burnham Overy had been bought by Chief Justice Coke, and much of what remained came into the family by the judicious alliance of his fourth son, John, with the heiress Meriel Wheatley. The smaller manors and properties—Naboth's vineyards—were gradually acquired by the Cokes, until the whole parish was theirs. The Wheatley property included the Manor House, known in Queen Elizabeth's day as "Hill Hall," whose roof sheltered John Coke and his son, then Robert Coke and Lady Anne, then Edward and his dear Cary, and so became the country residence of Thomas and Lady Margaret. It must surely have been a considerable mansion, since persons of such quality and wealth were content to dwell in it, and Lady Margaret thought it good enough for fine furniture. "Red flowered damask to make a bed at Holkham, £48," and "£11. 10. for 106 yards of green camblet to hang the room Lady Harold lay in," were entries in her account book for 1720.

But no trace of the old house remains; the very site is unknown, though it is certain that it stood very near to the western portion of its successor. Lord Leicester and Lady Margaret seem to have lived in it until about 1741, or perhaps a year earlier, when the special "Family Wing" of the new house was ready for their occupation. It may have been destroyed in 1756-57, since there exist some few accounts in those years for "taking down wainscot, and taking up floors in the Old House."



ORIGINAL DESIGN FOR THE SOUTH FRONT OF HOLKHAM.

From drawing by William Kent, at Holkham.



THE SOUTH FRONT, HOLKHAM.

Thomas Coke was doubtless fired with the desire of building himself a palace in those early days when he saw and admired the splendid homes of the magnates in Italy. His studies in practical architecture, his friendship with William Kent and Lord Burlington, his purchases of pictures and statues, and specially of books—his telling Sir John Newton that he considered a fine library "the chiefest adornment of a gentleman's house," will be remembered—all this shows that the conception of Holkham Hall took place in Italy.

Not many records about the building and furnishing of the great house have survived. Still, there is "documentary evidence" for all that shall be said about it in these pages. There is a legend that the late Lord Leicester burnt masses of family papers when he built his new Estate Office. We know that the first step in the creation of the present Holkham was the making and planting of the park, where hitherto there had been sheep-downs and common land, with, here and there, closes of arable land. As early as 1721, there is a bill for "Forest Trees for Holkham, £31 9."; and in 1722, "Trees for the plantations, £72." The beautiful obelisk in the ilex grove, which stands on the highest part of the park, and is said to mark its centre, was put up in 1727, and presently the temple in the said grove was ready for the fine furniture which was supplied by Mr. Jones, the upholsterer who provided dining-room chairs for the London house.

The foundations of Holkham Hall itself were not laid until 1734, sixteen years after Thomas Coke's marriage. A valid reason for this delay has already been hinted at. Mr. Coke could not afford the cost of building at that period of his life. He was reputed, indeed, to be one of the richest Commoners in England. His vast estates produced a gross rental of some £10,000, and his stipend as Postmaster-General was £1,000 a year, and there was profit from the Dungeness Lighthouse, and other sources.

But an account book of his disbursements which has survived the flames, shows that he spent a very great deal of money during the first years of his married life; and then—and then, there were those disastrous speculations in South Sea and other stock which have already been mentioned. We know that he was obliged to borrow money at high interest, even to mortgage his plate, and that throughout his life he was in debt. It is probable that he did not begin to build his house earlier because he was making an effort to pay off some part of the mortgages, etc., which burdened him. It is clear that he partially succeeded, selling land from time to time for the purpose. But the millstone hung about his neck and that of his successor, until that successor, his great-nephew Thomas William Coke, in or about the year 1808, sold the property at Reddich, near Manchester, which was the dowry of Clement Coke's wife, for £100,000, and cleared off the whole encumbrance. Such letters as these from Lord Leicester to his agent, or to his attorney, Mr. Lamb, are not infrequent, and they show a continued state of embarrassed affairs:

> 1743.—"I hope you will be able to sell the little thing in Suffolk and return us the money to live upon."
>
> 1749.—"There being bills to pay, servants wages, besides our living, which perplexes me very much, it will be necessary for you to come up, that we may settle with Mr. Lamb how we can get money to go on."
>
> 1750.—"Mr. Lamb has procured me £1,000, so we shall be able to go on till you come to town. . . ."
>
> 1754.—"I hope to sell Donyatt, Cleve, and perhaps Bevis Marks, . . . my present income, which is what, having no son, I am chiefly to consider, will be much increased. . . . I am glad you had such success finishing our sales so as to reduce my debt to a reasonable compass. I think your transactions this journey will put my affairs in a fine state."

Begun in 1734, the great house was not completed until 1764, and I do not think that this can have been entirely due to its creators acting on the principle of *festina lente,* though the extraordinary finish which characterises the house and its decorations must have gained by the deliberate methods employed. Had my lord been a free man in the article of debts, he would surely have built his house more quickly.

On the other hand, the process of building, the pleasure of seeing his consummate designs slowly becoming real before his eyes—this was the chief delight of his life; and the slow savouring of it prolonged the pleasure. But every man would wish to see his work accomplished. Depend upon it, he would have finished his house, and given the last touch, had he been able to do so, in less than thirty years.

The love of bricks and mortar, of gilding and carving, which so engrossed the gentlemen of the eighteenth century, is now no longer common. Rich people buy great houses ready-made. They do not sit down in a house close by, sursounded by all the dirt, the mud, the piles of bricks, the girders, etc., and enjoy every minute of the squalid sight, knowing that it will be spread before them, daily, for many years. If they built a large house, they would leave it to their architect and clerk of the works, live in London, or rent a country place, and visit their building only now and then for a few hours. Not so Lord Leicester. He loved beautiful things, but the slow adding of brick to brick was as beautiful to him, perhaps, as a landscape by his favourite Claude. He took pleasure in music, but the sound of hammers and axes, and the heavy tread of draught-horses bringing cart-loads of bricks through the slush, was the symphony he liked best.

Those long hours spent with his friend and master, William Kent, poring over their plans, altering, improving, looking forward to perfection, wondering what Vitruvius and Palladio would think of their disciples, had been very pleasant. It should seem that they had finished their plans for the exterior of the house by 1736, in which year (see the letter to Lord Burlington, p. 228) Lord Leicester (he was still, however, only Lord Lovell) says: "We must begin to think of the inside of the rooms." But to see the gradual fulfilment of their dreams—that was the more exquisite pleasure, and made up for what we should consider the discomfort of vast building operations going on round their dwelling. Watching the growth of his plantations in the park, the wonderful transformation of barren down to rich arable land, and the walls of his palace rising to heaven, Lord Leicester was able, let us hope, to forget his financial worries, sometimes even his disappointed hopes about his son.

With Kent's assistance, he had designed a palace in the Italian style, consisting of a great central block, 114 by 62 feet, with a wing or pavilion at each angle, 60 by 70 feet, joined to the central block by four corridors. The whole length of the house is 344 feet, and each side presents a perfect and regular front. We do not view the great mass of building as Kent and his pupil meant us to see it. They set it down, solid and stately, on the green floor of the park, the grass coming up nearly to the walls, with a few clumps of trees, and a land-steward's lodge in the classical taste, at a respectful distance. The late Lord Leicester added a vast terrace, with flower-beds and a fountain, to the south front, and built a great conservatory and several courts for offices, stables, etc., which join the wings on the east side. To the north front he added a porch, and a terrace of stone. So that the visitor today can scarcely realise the effect which the house was originally intended to produce. The exterior is so plain, so severe, that some are dismayed by the uncompromising bareness of the structure, and a few heedless visitors even permit themselves to pronounce the word "ugly."

But those who know their Palladio at Vicenza, and have seen some of the stately palaces built by his scholars on the Brenta, are sure that Mr. Kent and Mr. Coke knew what they were about. They held that a plain building, even though it err on the side of sternness, is more satisfying in the end, than many of its beswagged and bepinnacled rivals. A legitimate criticism is that Holkham would have looked more comely had it been built of stone. Stone would have "weathered" whereas the hard brick walls look as new as when they first rose from the ground. Or, if Kent's earlier plan of a complete rustication of the exterior had been carried out, and his balustraded stairways added to the south front, the severity of Holkham would have been mitigated. People see houses of stone scarcely older than Holkham, and call them "delightful old houses." To the edge of doom Holkham will never look old, and to many persons that will seem a pity. It may be remembered, however, that stone perishes and needs repair, whereas brick of the Holkham kind does not.

But the interior of Holkham is as rich and varied, and stately and beautiful, as the exterior is plain. Even those whose preference is for the Gothic, or for panelled walls and Caroline furniture—even they admit the splendour of the interior.

Kent and his disciple settled that the house should be entered by means of a small, low, unpretending doorway in the centre of the north front—that unadorned north front; step into shelter from that searching wind which daily brings its tidings from the North Pole; and then you are to find your-

THE NORTH FRONT, HOLKHAM.

THE GREAT HALL, HOLKHAM.

self in a superb temple of dazzling alabaster, whose fluted columns soar to the richest ceiling that even Inigo Jones ever saw in dreams—Ionic columns which rise from the low walls, whose alabaster is varied only by string-courses above and below of Vitruvian roll and key pattern in white marble on a black ground. Behind the colonnades run galleries, their walls pierced by niches holding full-length statues or casts, and by nine doors of finest mahogany set in carved alabaster frames. The columns converge southwards towards a stone stairway, at the summit of which a Tribune or Judge might sit enthroned. For the fashion of this Hall was suggested to young Mr. Coke by a design of Vitruvius for a Temple of Justice. Palladio had drawn attention to its beauty, and Mr. Coke had exclaimed, "I will build it." It is easy to picture the enthusiastic youth crying out, "Vitruvius, perhaps, never saw the realisation of his design. It never got beyond Palladio's dreams. I, Thomas Coke, will raise this temple; it shall form the *atrium* of my house!"

One of Mr. Kent's drawings for the Hall shows it almost exactly as it is seen to-day, the only alterations being the elimination of a colossal statue at the foot of the stairway, and of a fireplace in each side-wall; a plainer elevation of the north wall; the substitution of a wrought-iron railing for a pillared balustrade between the columns, and a different disposition of the steps.

CHAPTER XXXIV

HOLKHAM—BUILDING AND DECORATION (*Continued*)

LORD LEICESTER did not live to see his Hall in the perfection that we see. Most of the columns must have been in their place by September, 1756, when Mrs. Lybbe Powys was able to write: "The Grand Hall is the height of the house, fifty feet; round it is a colonnade of alabaster pillars which give it a noble appearance." But as late as November, 1757, masons were being paid 2s. 6d. per day "for loading alabaster columns at Wells and unloading at Holkham and getting into the Hall"; and it was not until 1760 that two guineas were given to the marble masons "to entertain themselves with on finishing their work." A letter, kindly communicated to me by Lord Falmouth, from the famous Admiral Boscawen to his wife, shows that in October, 1757, the columns were not yet finished.

"HOLKHAM,
"*11th Oct*^{br} 1757.

" . . . With Lord Egremont, and Lord Thomond, and Lord Waldegrave, I set out from Newmarket on Sunday . . . and yesterday morning came hither. It is above thirty miles. A very kind reception from the fat, laughing, joking peer of this house, whose taste for building is so elegant that it is far beyond conception or description; I have studied the plan, and the house, and can only tell you it is three hundred forty foot in front, faces the South, the Approach to it between three and four mile, a river close to it, the house a square body built round two courts, and four pavilions at the angles. It is not finished nor furnished, but the room, or Chambre d'Assembly, 105 feet long, we live in, elegant to a degree, and when lighted up, quite scenery; a library at each end, the middle a gallery ornamented with perfect antique statues, all over house the ceilings are finished, and the finest furniture preparing that can be purchased; Pickford the person recommended to us by Lord Duncannon to make our chimney peices does that business here, and is now at this place making the Pillars for the Hall at the Grand Entrance; the house is built of the same brick with that of the Duke of Norfolks in London, it is made on the spot. The Appartments are elegant, and very convenient, a dressing room to every bed-chamber, with servants room to each, and Water closets to most of them; the Cellars I think the worst, but they are good. We went yesterday in a one horse chaise to view the house and grounds, in many situations it makes a very fine landscape, a village as near as Clandon to us, a Church upon a green bank nearer, a river with a large island in it and timber trees on it as near to the house as our grotto, and the sea within two miles, which is not seen from the house, but from evry part of the grounds about it; he has made great plantations, but I can't say good ones, they will be something in time. To name all beauties would be impossible. the Lady of the House seems to be [a] good sort of a Pyning kind of woman, I conclude clever in her family; she has endowed six houses for as many decayed old people, they live at the gates of one of the entrances into the domain, and have all the conveniences necessary, I visited their habitation yesterday; we never saw her but at meals.

"Tomorrow Lord Waldegrave and I set out for Houghton, Lord Leicester goes with us, . . . (I had forgot to tell you that Lord Leicester has a very fine collection of pictures, Lord Egremont who knows the hands and seems to understand them, says at least ten thousand pounds worth, all I know of them is they appear very fine and pleasing). . . ."

It is interesting to trace the columns of the Hall from their bed in a Derbyshire quarry to their final home at Holkham.

In May, 1756, seven blocks of "Alablaster," containing 148 feet at 3s. 6d. per foot, were sent by Mr. John Taberer, of Tutbury, Derbyshire, from Castle Hay Quarry. Of course, this was not the first consignment, but we learn from the bills that some of it was carted to Willne Ferry, some to Burton, and then it all journeyed down the River Trent to Gainsborough, where it took ship for Wells. The arrival of alabaster at Holkham was still going on in the autumn of 1757, and on June 17 and August 3 in that year two worthy ships, the *Supply* and the *Good Intent,* carried 104 and 56 blocks respectively to Wells, and a quantity of lime from Ashbourne, Derbyshire, came with them. Their bills of lading read pleasantly:

"Shipped by the Grace of God in good order and well-conditioned by Mary Cressey, in and upon the Good ship called the 'Good Intent' whereof is Master under God for the present voyage Capt. Jas. Wharam, and now riding at Anchor in the Trent by God's Grace bound for Wells, to the Right Honble. the Earl of Leicester, at Holkham in Norfolk, 56 blocks Alablaster, 16 hgsheads Lyme, freight to Wells twelve shillings per tun . . . and are to be delivered at the aforesaid port of Wells (the Danger of the Seas only excepted).

"And so God send the Good Ship to her desired Port in safety. Amen."

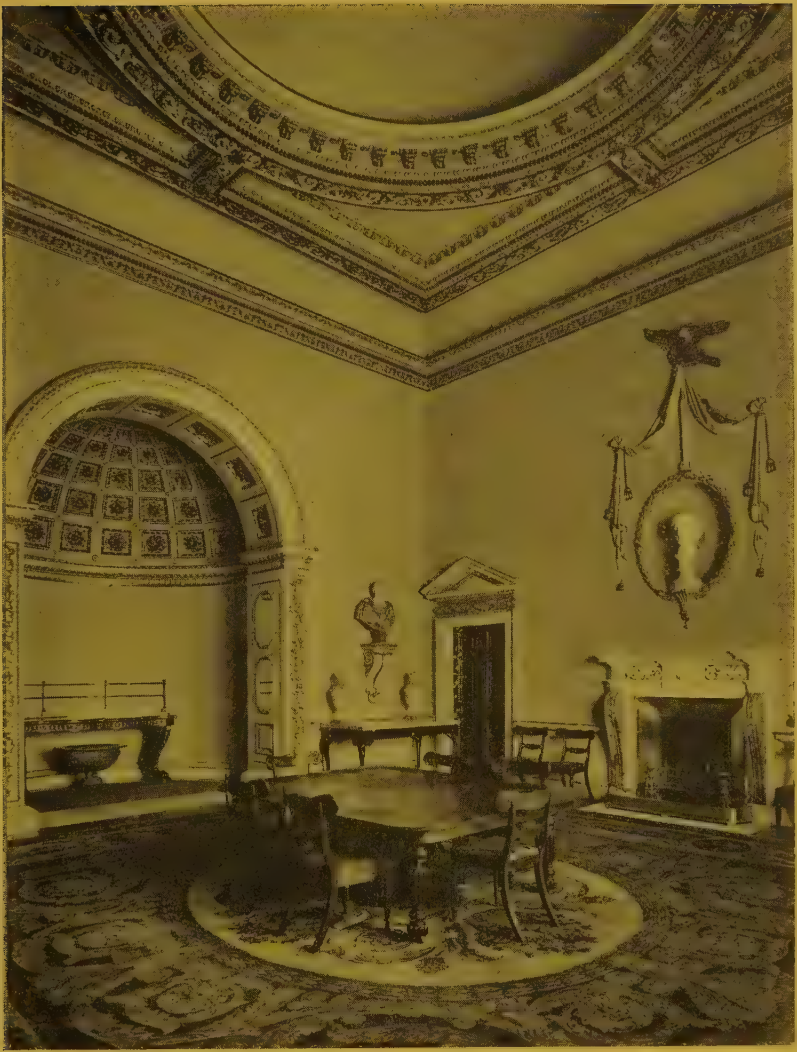
The total cost of these consignments of alabaster, previous to their arrival at Gainsborough, was £253, which sum included the charges of the ingenious Mr. Pickford, statuary, who had been employed for twenty years in making marble fireplaces for Holkham, as well as carving festoons at Cambridge. One entry concerning him is a puzzle: "Mr. Pickford's expences on account of the otter-hounds, £1. 17. 0."; this was in 1737. Was he a sportsman as well as a statuary?

The columns were copied from those of the Temple of Fortuna Virilis at Rome, a small temple which has but recently been freed from surrounding encumbrances, so as to be seen, in some measure, in its pristine condition. Above the door of entrance to this unique Hall, Lord Leicester placed what we may call his version of "monumentum si requiris, circumspice." On a tablet, in a beautiful Italian letter resembling that of Nicolas Jenson, we read:

> "This Seat, on an open barren Estate,
> was planned, planted, built, decorated,
> and inhabited the middle of the XVIIIth Century
> By Thos. Coke, Earl of Leicester."

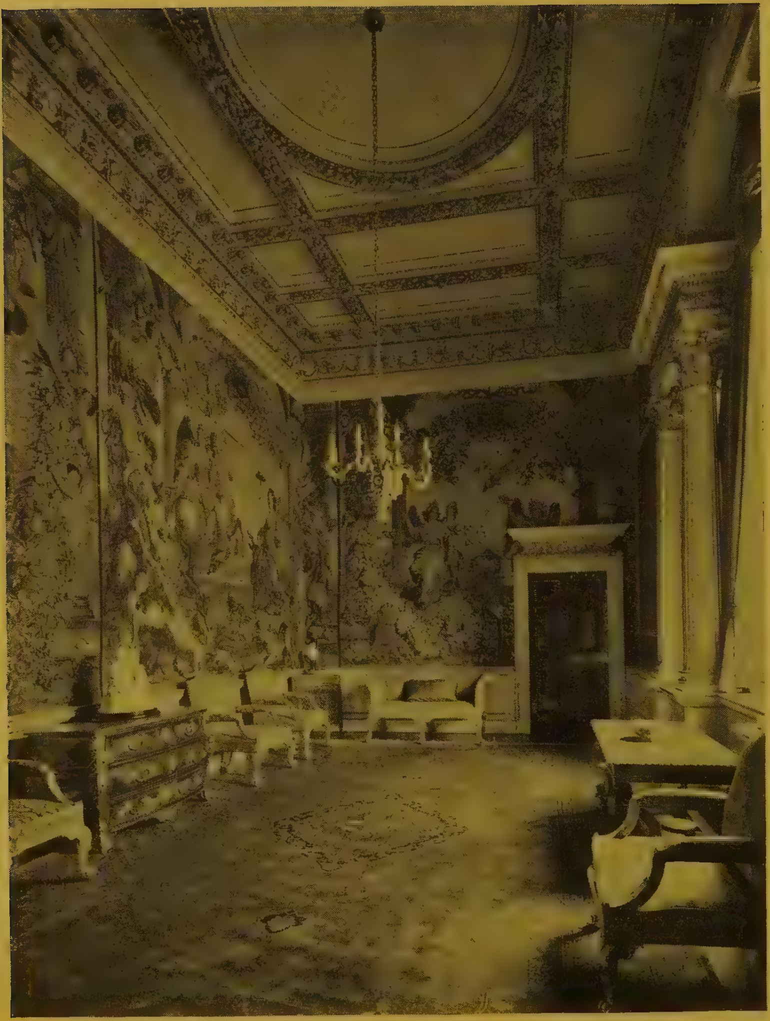
Facing this, over the door at the top of the stairway is his bust, in plaster, by Roubiliac. The door gives access to the *piano nobile,* which consists of a series of splendid rooms which surround the Hall: Saloon, two Drawing-Rooms, a Landscape Room, two State Bedrooms with their closets and a sitting-room, a Gallery with two octagon Tribunes at each end, and a Dining-Room. The walls, except in the Gallery and the Dining-Room, are hung with crimson Genoa velvet (the Saloon with "Cassoy"), crimson silk damask, or tapestry. Much of the tapestry is interesting. Three fine panels of Brussels work by Auwerc representing Europe, Africa, and America, were purchased for the great State Bedchamber. More was required, and the painter Zuccarelli was paid £80 for designing several pieces—"A Pilgrimage to Mecca," etc. —to represent Asia, as well as two which flank the State Bed, and, appropriately enough, are "Sleep" and "Vigilance."

The bill for this extra tapestry exists. The price was £54; the bill is made out by "George Smith Bradshaw and Paul Saunders," and the receipt is signed by the latter "for myself and Partners." One of the pieces has "P. Saunders, Soho," upon it. Messrs. Bradshaw and Saunders were cabinet-makers, as well as tapestry weavers; the State Bed and various magnificent chairs came from them. As early as 1740, Mr. Bradshaw



THE NORTH DINING-ROOM, HOLKHAM.

"Decorative Severity."



STATE SITTING-ROOM, HOLKHAM.

was paid £35 "for mending tables, cabinet work and furnishing Mr. Coke's room at London."

Among the artists they employed was Mr. Edward Penne, R.A. His pictures of "the Marquis of Granby relieving a Distressed Family" and the "Death of General Wolfe" are at Oxford, with replicas at Petworth. Lord Leicester pays to "Edw: Penne of Leicester Fields for painting two large Landskips, [with] the cloths and stretching frames, £6. 6. 0." The receipt of this sum "for the use of Mr. Edw. Penne" is signed by Paul Saunders. The two "landskips" are not at Holkham now, nor are they mentioned in any of the eighteenth-century inventories of the pictures. Is it probable that they were designed for tapestry which was never executed?

Good tapestry by Vanderbank from designs by Albani hangs in one of the bedrooms, showing[1] Vulcan, Venus, and many charming Cupids; an extra piece for this set had to be supplied by Mr. Bradshaw, as were two fine sets, after designs from Watteau, if we may take as evidence some similar tapestry at Ham House.

The State Sitting-Room has very fine Brussels tapestry by Peemans—subject, "The Seasons"; and in 1760, two rooms in the Chapel Wing were hung with "old tapestry." This has disappeared.

Kent must have designed the furniture for these rooms, and very fine it is—not so heavy in effect as some of his work. Rich and stately as is the decoration throughout the house, there is nothing heavy or that looks overdone. Knowing what Kent did elsewhere, one is led to the conclusion that the fine taste of Thomas Coke was the predominant influence. Did he not tell the Duke of Newcastle that he could not leave Holkham, because he wished to see some principal parts finished "under my own eye which alone I can trust"? From the beginning, the chairs and sofas in the principal rooms were covered with crimson velvet or damask as they are now, except in the Gallery, where blue morocco leather was used. This Gallery is perhaps the most beautiful room in the house, truly Palladian. With its tribunes, it measures 105 by 21 feet in width, and 23 feet in height. Mrs. Lybbe Powys was of the same mind as Admiral Boscawen, and thought it the "most superbly elegant she ever saw, but the whole house deserves that distinction." The Gallery is painted a dead white, with ornaments of gilding. Arthur Young, too, wrote of it, "One of the most beautiful rooms I have seen."

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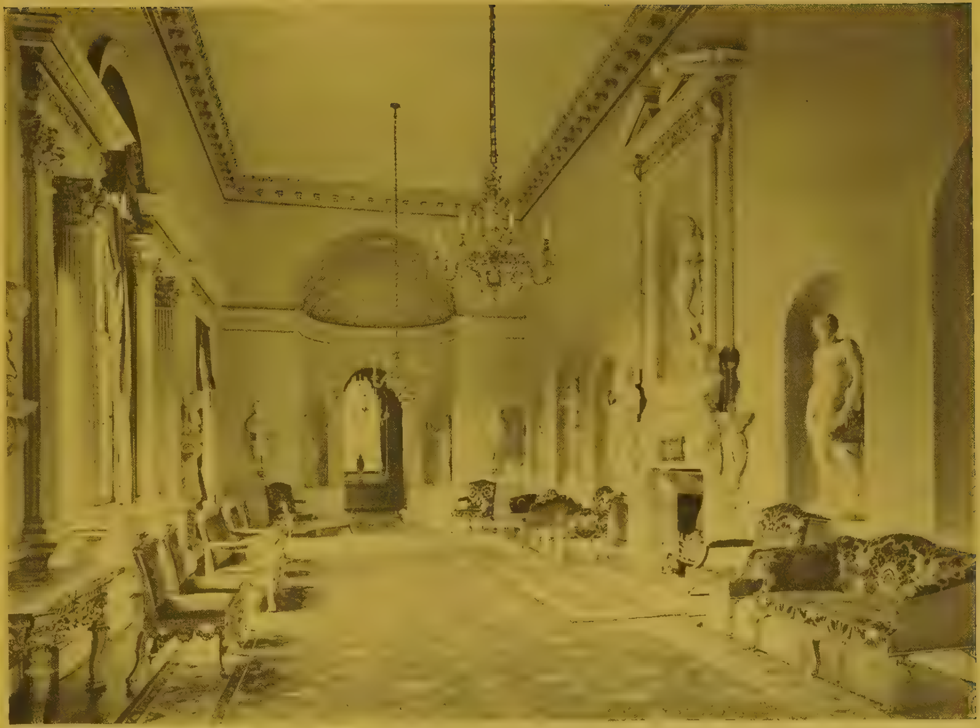
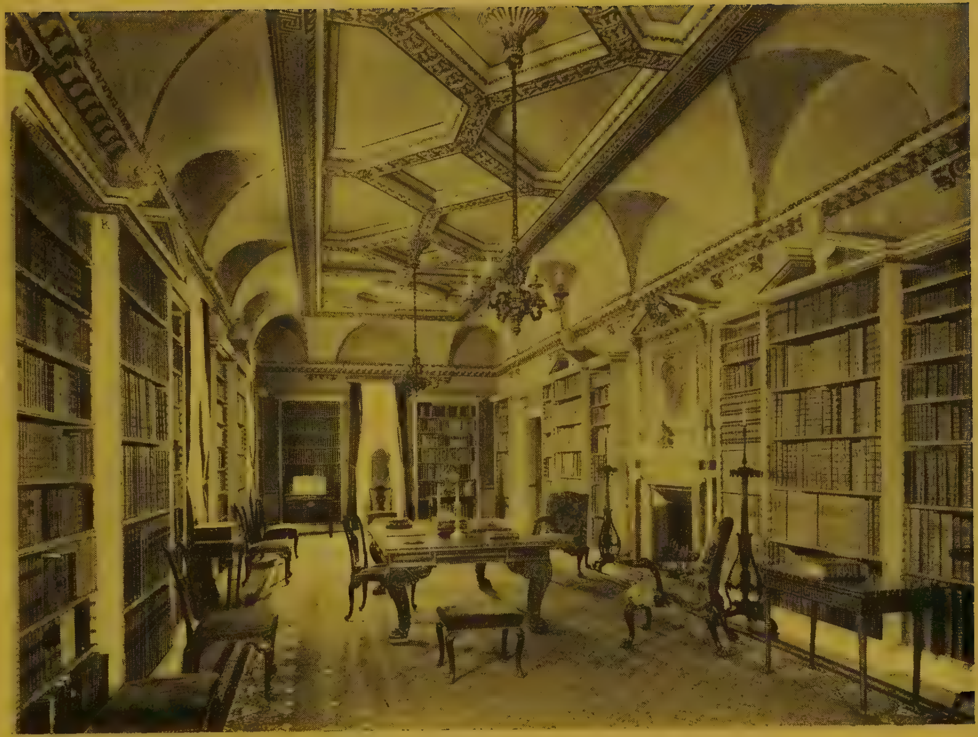
[1] See the *Burlington Magazine* for June, 1929, for an article on varying sets of this tapestry by Mr. H. C. Marillier.

The cold, pale walls are indeed relieved only by the gilding of the great Venetian window on the west side, and that on the coves over the arches leading to the tribunes. For attention is to be concentrated on the eleven statues and eight busts which look out, in speaking silence, from their niches or from their consoles on the wall. Each of the tribunes was planned with four niches to receive colossal statues, but the north tribune alone is so peopled. Of its four great figures, Roubiliac greatly admired the Juno; and Lucius Antoninus has had the distinction of a head and right arm, added by the great Bernini. Tradition says that the four statues destined for the south tribune were shipwrecked in the Bay of Biscay, so the niches were then fitted as bookcases for folios, splendidly bound and of the largest size. Books have language as well as statues, and these do not look at all incongruous. There are good reasons for doubting the Bay of Biscay story. The Dining-Room is another noble specimen of decorative severity. It is a square of 27 feet, exclusive of a great niche, 9 by 10 feet, for the sideboard. In the centre of the ceiling is a dome, 14 feet in height by 8 feet. Here, again, decoration is provided only by the gilded pilasters and capitals of the window, and the gilded carving of the sideboard arch, by its gilded cove, and by four busts. Two of these busts stand on consoles on the walls, and two regard the diners, in awful severity, from niches which are draped with slender Kentian folds and tassels, their knot held aloft by an eagle. Mr. Carter executed the carvings of the sideboard niche, and the two sumptuous marble fireplaces. Indeed, he shared the responsibility of the beautiful fireplaces of the house with the ingenious Mr. Pickford. Their variety is as astonishing as the variety of the ceilings; many of these were adapted from designs of Inigo Jones, several were by Kent himself, and two are attributed to Lord Burlington. All of them are delicately gilded except those of the Great Hall, the Statue Gallery and the Chapel. Perhaps Lord Leicester's consummate taste is nowhere more



THE STATUE GALLERY, HOLKHAM.



THE LONG LIBRARY, HOLKHAM.

remarkably shown than in the absence of gilding from these ceilings. He saw that gold and rosy alabaster would look vulgarly together, and he restricted his gilding in presence of his marble statues. The Chapel walls are of alabaster, and not even the beautiful red-cloaked Madonna by Guido which (with two attendant saints supplied by Cipriani) forms the altarpiece, prevents this smaller temple from looking chillingly severe. Lord Leicester trusted, it may be, that the warmth of devotion which should breathe within these walls would counteract the first effect of iciness which they undoubtedly make.

We saw that the first part of the great house to be finished and probably inhabited, about 1741, was the South-West or Family Wing, which contained on the *piano nobile* " dressing-rooms " or, as we should say, sitting-rooms, with bedrooms and their attendant closets for my lord and lady, and the beautiful Library. Above-stairs, some bedrooms (Lord Coke's room, and that where Lady Mary imprisoned herself). Below-stairs, an " eating parlour," and rooms for my lady's women, my lord's valet-de-chambre, and other servants. There were also on this ground-floor a bathroom with a marble bath, and other conveniences, noted by Admiral Boscawen, and rare, it is said, in the houses of that period, to which water was supplied from lead cisterns. These aids to comfort and sanitation were to be found in the body of the house, and each of the wings; and further comfort was sought by the use of brick flues in the walls supplied with hot air from several furnaces, so that the rooms might be well warmed.

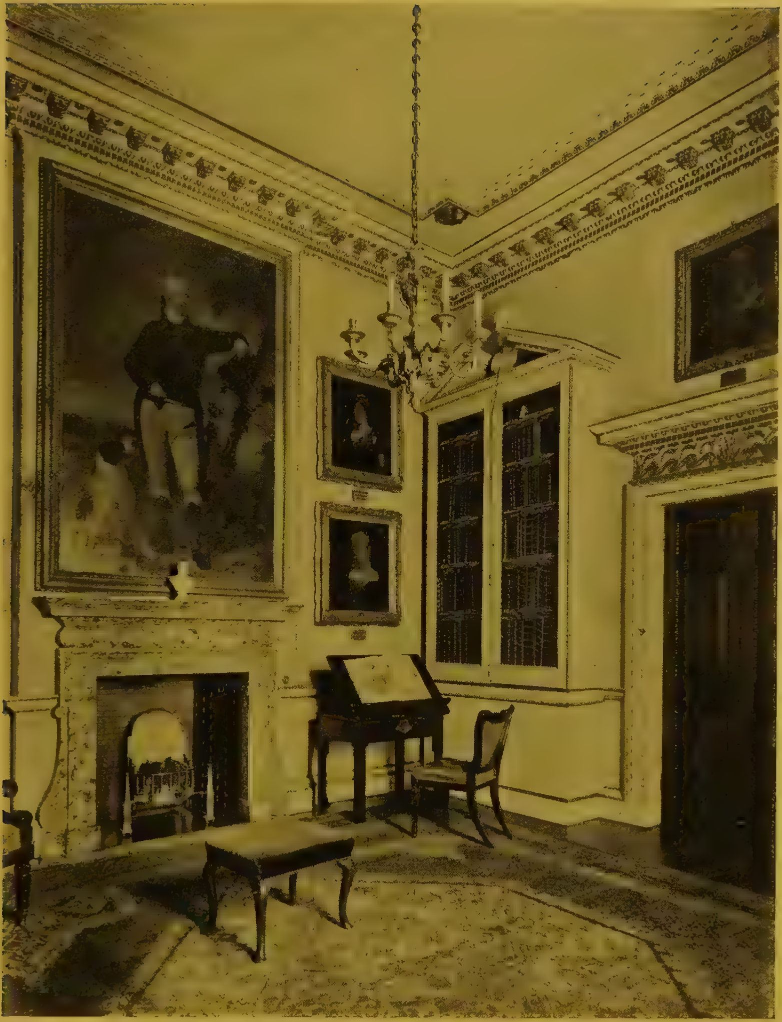
The " Long Library " is a rarely beautiful room, mellow with the delicious hues of fine calf and morocco. Kent's first design for ornamenting the lunettes which support the ceiling with Pompeian arabesques was not carried out, and here again the taste of Lord Leicester triumphed. But the ceiling, one of Kent's own designs, is a masterpiece of light delicacy.

Readers of Thackeray will remember that when Mr. Snob visited Carabas Castle, the worthy housekeeper was able to name the decorative artists who had made it splendid. " The carvings of the chimlies is by Van Chislum, the most famous sculpture of his hage and country, the ceiling by Calimanco . . . the winder ornaments by Van der Putty."

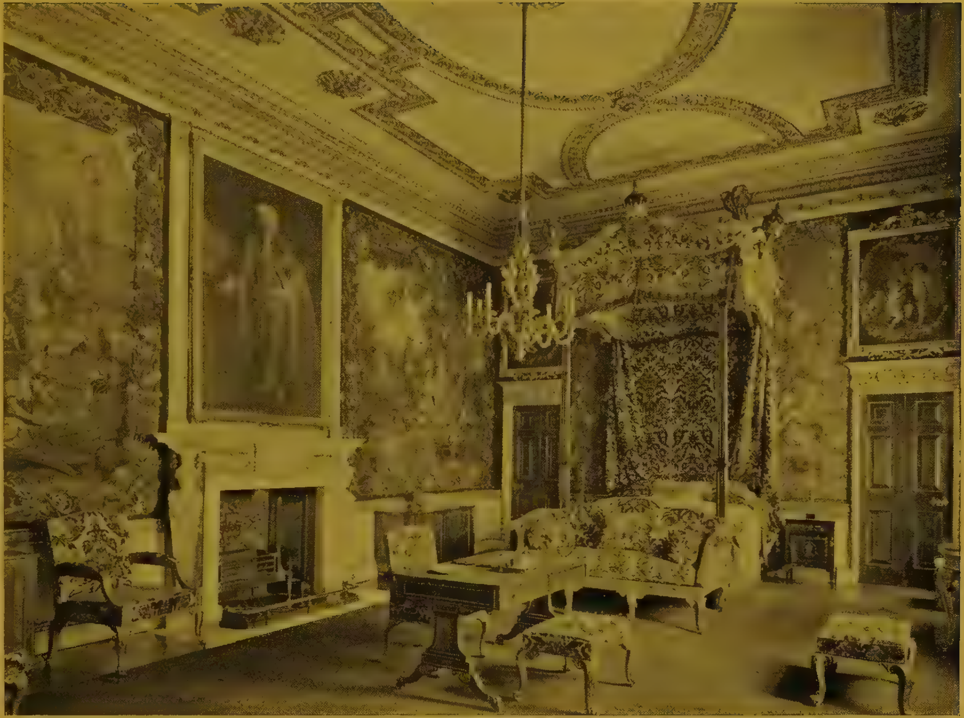
The Mrs. Breadbaskets of Holkham, if they choose, and have good memories, will be able to assign much of its decoration to the forgotten cabinet-makers and decorators employed by Lord Leicester, for an Account Book gives the names of a considerable number of them, and worthy they are to be remembered. Of course, the famous name of Chippendale does not occur, for his heyday of fashion was rather later, and Lord Leicester had workmen whom he considered the best, as indeed they must have been. The carving and gilding of the doorways, friezes, chimneypieces, looking-glasses in the Family Wing hardly do greater honour to Mr. Kent who designed them or Thomas Coke who criticised them, than to Mr. Marsden who carved them. Nor do the charges of this Van Chislum seem excessive. "Rich freizes for over doors at 40/-," and the chimneypieces in the Library and Lady Leicester's sitting-room, at £14 and £17 10., seem moderate in price, as the photograph of the latter will show. One of the "rich freizes" is seen over the door in the picture of a Corner of the "Classical Library." In this, a small bust, after Roubiliac, of the "only begetter" of the house looks down upon an opened book, one of the fine MSS. which he bought at Lyons—the splendid Ovid illuminated in Flanders for Raphael de Marcatellis in the last years of the fifteenth century. The Chief Justice is here too.

Messrs. Goodison were among the principal providers of furniture (the fine brass work on the great porphyry sideboard is theirs), as was Mr. Bradshaw, of Saunders and Bradshaw, Soho; Messrs. Lillie and Copeman carved picture frames and much else; the names of Mr. Almond, Mr. Boson, Mr. Hallet, and Mr. Hodson occur among the cabinet-makers; and Mr. Jones was an important person. He made and carved walnut-tree chairs at £4 2s., and "satees" at £7 16s., Mr. Walters was the artist who so delicately gilded the fine sets of mahogany sofas and settees, one of which was to furnish the Gallery. Brettingham says that the great looking-glasses in the Drawing-Rooms were made by Mr. Whittle; and Mr. Pugh was the maker of others.

No less a sculptor than Mr. Michael Rysbrack mended and mounted mosaic slabs as tables. The great Calimanco was represented at Holkham by the ingenious Mr. T. Clark, of Westminster, "bred in the school of Lord Burlington," who is credited with the execution of the ceilings. When carving



THE CLASSICAL LIBRARY, HOLKHAM, SHOWING ONE OF MR. MARSDEN'S "RICH FRIEZES AT 40S."



GREEN STATE BEDROOM, HOLKHAM.

in marble was to be done (and there was a great deal), Mr. Carter, and Mr. Pickford, of the Cambridge festoons and otter-hounds, were there with their chisels.

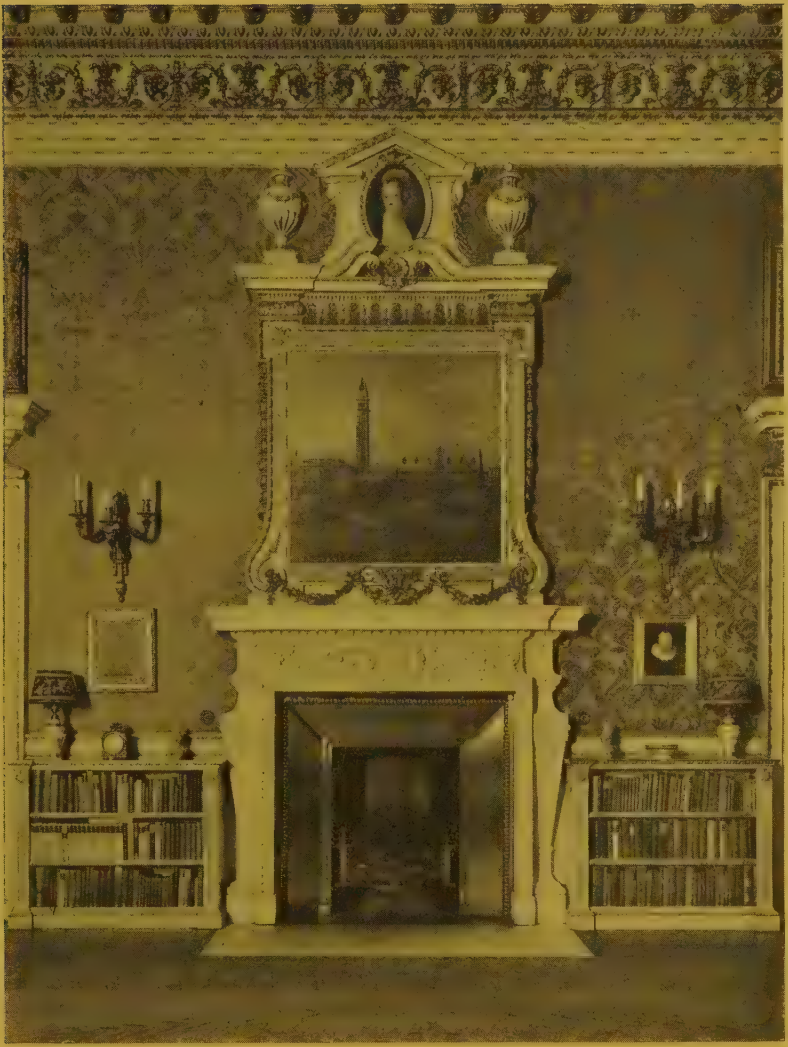
The Family Wing was nearly finished in 1740. Enough furniture had been ordered and paid for, Mr. Marsden's beautiful decorations were in place, and such homely items in the accounts as "Hanging bells, putting in locks," a "Dutch machine lined with tin for airing beds," and "Blankets for the Footmen's bed," are signs of impending habitation. Mark the singular—the "Footmen's bed," not beds. Jeames, poor fellow, slept four in a bed, as we read à propos of Baroness Bernstein's lacqueys, in "Esmond." But as Lady Leicester was not unmindful of the spiritual welfare of her servants (she provided improving books for them, as her mother-in-law Cary had done), we may hope that she made their lot as comfortable as the custom of the times allowed. At any rate, they had good blankets, and some of them stayed long in her service, and they had what, before the War, we should have called ample wages.

The centre block of the house, as we have seen, was not roofed in until 1749, the year after Kent's death, and the North-East or Kitchen Wing, and the North-West or Strangers' Wing, were building during the last ten years of Lord Leicester's life. The Guest Rooms were ready for decoration and furniture by 1758. Their ceilings, still "in the manner of Inigo Jones," to which the guests are to look up from their very comfortable beds, correspond in grace with those in the Family Wing, and the walls are rich with tapestry or damask. But, otherwise, their decoration is simpler, no "very rich freizes, for over doors" by Mr. Marsden. Which was the warm bedroom which the Duke of Newcastle was invited to occupy is something of a puzzle, unless it were one of those vacated by Lord Coke and Lady Mary in the Family Wing.

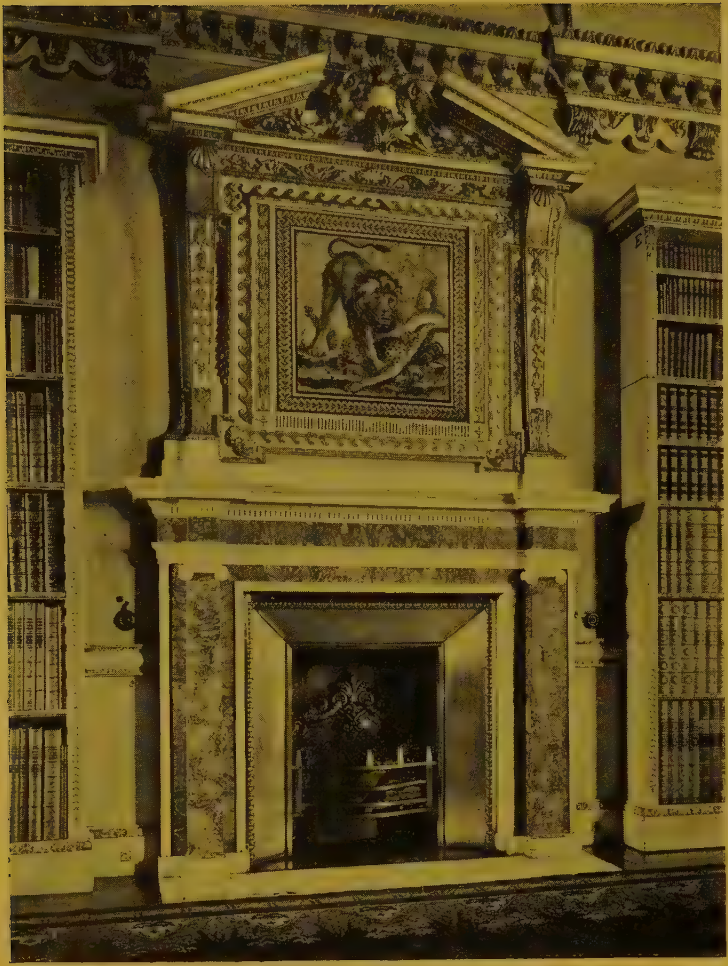
These were sumptuously decorated and furnished, and quite worthy of a Prime Minister.

But as Lord and Lady Leicester entertained their Norfolk neighbours with abundant hospitality, as well as friends from a distance, it is not easy to understand where these slept before 1758, unless they were lodged in the old house. This continued to receive repairs long after my lord had established himself in the new house, and as it was almost adjacent, it may be that guests were accommodated there.

When Lord Leicester died in 1759, he had seen his palace only as a beautiful *bozzetto,* a partially decorated shell. In his Will he desired that £2,000 a year should be set aside for the finishing of the house, and a deed was signed on August 23, 1764, by Lady Leicester, by Wenman Coke, Matthew Lamb the attorney—Sir Matthew, as he was now, the owner, through his wife, of Melbourne, and soon to die (in 1768), leaving a million of money—and Mr. Cauldwell the agent, in which it was acknowledged that this trust was now at an end, and the work completed and paid for, though there was still something to be done, and that something was found to cost £1,700. Lady Leicester gave up the fine house in Great Russell Street, which was presently to acquire fame as the home of Topham Beauclerk, taking a smaller one in Hanover Square, and she brought the best of the London furniture to Holkham. So anxious was she to be done with building and furnishing, that she spent £3,000 of her own money on furniture. Much of this was spent on beds, blinds, carpets, and other humble but necessary equipments; but there were new hangings to be bought, where "the old Damask was in rags and taken away." She removed her own apartment from the Family Wing to North State Suite, and furnished the Chapel Wing well, though giving its rooms plain ceilings and doorways. Her fireplaces, however, were of marble. She finished the East Drawing-Room and the State Bedchambers, for which furniture and velvet had already been provided, but not set up, and she bought extra tapestry, and velvet for Kent's fine chairs. Her Mr. Marsden was one Mr. James Miller, who was retained in her service at £50 a year. He it was who carved the frames for chairs and tables in the East Drawing-Room and State Bedchamber and carved the capitals for the Chapel pillars; while Robert May and Peter Moor, "joiners," made and carved the beautiful cedar-wood screen, with lime-tree ornaments, which adorns the west end of the Chapel and conceals the family pew. Messrs. Scatcherd and Neale did all the gilding required, and were paid 3s. a day, and 11s. 6d. for 100 gold leaves.



CHIMNEY-PIECE BY WILLIAM KENT, CARVED BY MR. MARSDEN,
IN LADY LEICESTER'S SITTING-ROOM.



CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE LONG LIBRARY, HOLKHAM,
BY WILLAM KENT AND MR. MARSDEN.

Slightly enlarged at a later date to enclose a mosaic brought from Hadrian's Villa.

CHAPTER XXXV

MARGARET, COUNTESS OF LEICESTER—HOLKHAM COMPLETED

UNLESS Lady Leicester had come to share her husband's architectural enthusiasms, one cannot envy her, childless and alone, and sixty years old, faced with a task that was still formidable. Her sister Lady Gower—formerly wife to Earl Harold, son of the Duke of Kent—was the only relation who could be a comfort to her, for Lady Sondes and Lady Salisbury were dead, and Lady Isabella Delaval is said to have been weak-minded. From the indomitable and successful manner in which the solitary old lady undertook and completed her task, it may be inferred that, under a quiet exterior, she had a strong character, worthy of her famous great-grandmother, Anne Clifford, Countess of Dorset, and afterwards of Pembroke, by descent from whom she herself was Baroness Clifford. When Admiral Boscawen described her as a "good sort of a Pyning kind of woman," he probably meant only that she was very quiet in manner, but he acknowledged her cleverness. It is true that Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote: "I am not surprised at Lord Leicester leaving his large estate to his Lady, notwithstanding the contempt with which he always treated her, and her real inability for managing it." But Lady Mary did not always know as much as she thought she did, and in those days, as now, ladies were apt to say things of each other not strictly accurate. Lord Leicester had written of his wife (p. 238): "However I may seem to the world, my whole happiness is wrapt up in her who has ever behaved so well to me." Lord Leicester probably knew better than Lady Mary about his wife's ability, and she certainly deserved the trust he reposed in her. In one important direction she was at fault, but in this her husband had also been misled. Both of them trusted their agent, Mr. Ralph Cauldwell, unreservedly, but in money matters he was undeserving of their confidence, and "feathered his nest" at their expense. Lord Leicester in his Will directed that "Mr. Cauldwell shall be employed as Land Steward, as he is now, for his life, with his present salary of £200; and for his faithful services I give him £200 more per annum for his life." This handsome salary was enjoyed by Mr. Cauldwell for fifteen years, and the rogue made himself as indispensable to the widow as he had to her lord. In 1763 she wrote to him: "I think myself ever obliged to you for your attention to my quiet and ease, as well as profit, which is the only chance I have to enable me to pass my declining age with care and quiet."

Diplomatic Mr. Cauldwell! Had Lady Leicester but known what was going on all the fifteen years of her reign! She bequeathed him £2,000 and charged £200 per annum "on the estates at Peterston, in Holkham, and Burnham, purchased by me," for his benefit. Afterwards these estates were to go to Wenman Coke, as part of the "Grand Estate." This bit of Burnham included the ground which provided the brick earth, hitherto rented for £5 a year.

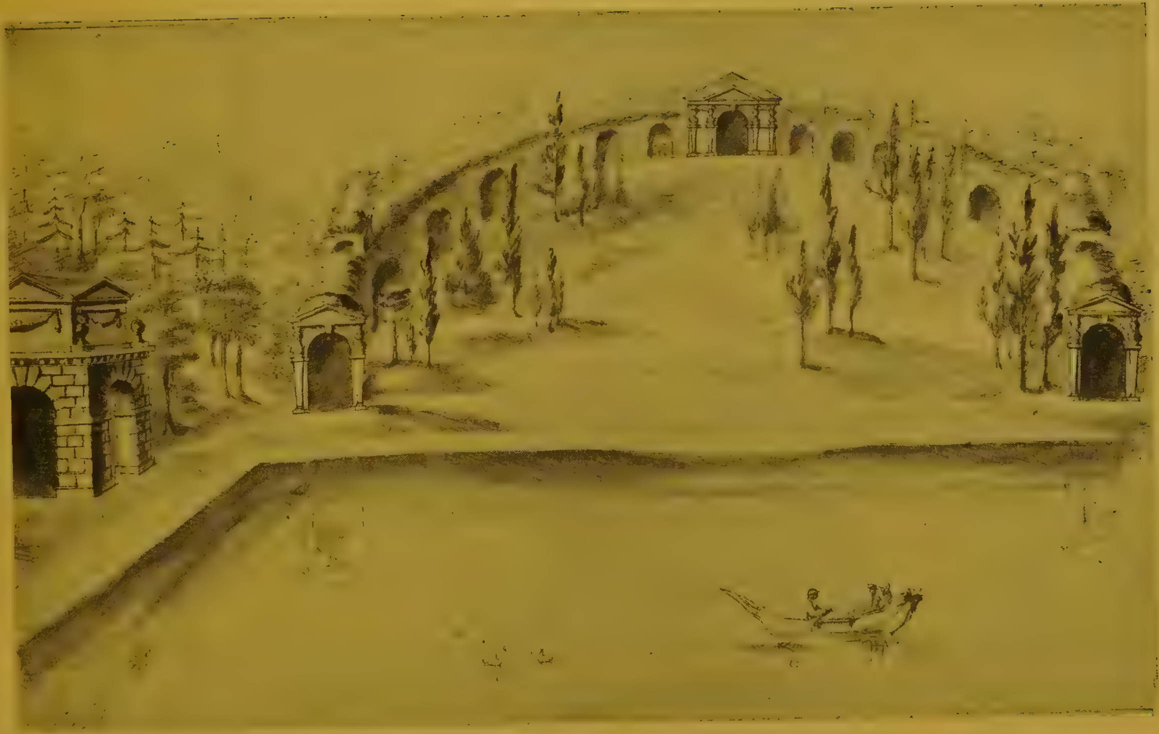
Wenman enjoyed his long-waited-for inheritance barely a year, and when his son, the celebrated Thomas William Coke, assumed power, he discovered what Mr. Cauldwell had been at, and brought an action against him. In vain Cauldwell pleaded that during his stewardship the value of the Norfolk estates had almost doubled; £7,712 in 1741, they were £11,036 in 1758 and £13,493 in 1776. Mr. Coke would have none of him. Farington tells an amusing story about the land-steward and his methods, as given to Sir Thomas Lawrence by Mr. Coke: this recounts how a tenant, anxious for a favourable renewal of his lease, sent Mr. Cauldwell a goose pie, and inside the goose there was a bribe of £500. No wonder that Arthur Young found the Holkham rents low!

But if she was deceived by her "faithful" servant, Lady Leicester made no mistake about carrying out her husband's aspirations concerning the house and park. She completed the decoration of the Great Hall, which from first to last cost more than £3,000, the last touch of all being an iron handrail between the columns, made by her "Master Smith," Thomas Hall, and, as we have seen, she furnished the Strangers' Wing, and practically built the Chapel. Its scaffolding was

WILLIAM KENT (1684-1748).

From a portrait at Nuneham, first attributed to Slaughter, but by the Third Earl of Harcourt to Kent himself.

By permission of Viscount Harcourt.



THE SEAT ON THE MOUNT (DESTROYED IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY).

From drawing by Wm. Kent, at Holkham.

"struck" in November, 1761, but had to be re-erected in 1763 to put up the ceiling and entablature, "enriched by Lozinge panelling and flowers by hand, from a model carved by Mr. Miller at 2/6," and a "fully enriched intablature cimarecta sunk in panel, and flowers in frieze at 1/8, consoles," etc. By 1762 the whole of the house seems to have been finished. But what a horrible state of things must have prevailed around it! There were the brick-kilns and the masons' yards to be cleared away, roads to be constructed, everything to be made tidy. A stouter heart than Lady Leicester's might have quailed before such a task. But she grappled with it, and overcame it by the help of Mr. Lancelot Brown, the celebrated "Capability Brown," who visited Holkham in 1762, 1763, and 1764, at fifty guineas a visit, levelled and sloped the ground round the house, planted trees—notably the grove of noble ilexes south of the kitchen-garden—designed roads, and generally put things to right. His art of landscape being derived from that of Kent, who had laid out the park and made the lake at Holkham, he was the right man to employ. If the original stables, the stone bridge, the classical Steward's Lodge, the Versailles-like Mount with its arches and pavilion, the dove-house, and the twin Porters' Lodges at the south foot of the Obelisk Hill, had not been destroyed by succeeding Cokes, Holkham could have shown a very complete specimen of the combined genius for landscape architecture of Kent and Brown—as it is, Kent's beautiful temple in the Obelisk Wood, and his triumphal arch, are the only buildings of the kind that have been allowed to remain, except the orangery, and that has been altered. For the sowing of the lawns, 126 pounds of white clover seed at 4d. were bought for the north and south fronts in 1763, and 3 hundredweight at 40s. for the east front (now covered by the late Lord Leicester's vast courts for stables, laundries, etc.). The same year 30 sacks of Suffolk hay seeds costing £4 10s. arrive, and more had to be got next year. The total cost of carrying out Mr. Brown's directions came to more than £1,000. While he was at work, and the dismantling of the workmen's buildings was in progress, Lady Leicester spent two years in Berkshire, at first with Lady Gower at Bill Hill, and then at a house which she rented in the same neighbourhood. At length, in 1765, Lady Leicester could dismiss the workmen who had swarmed about the place for thirty years, though not without a difference with Messrs. Atkinson, the contractors, about their charges, and settle peacefully to pass her " declining years."

Here for a time we must leave her, and say something about a matter which is very curious, and not creditable to two of the chief persons implicitly trusted by Lord Leicester. It made Horace Walpole utter a word of disapproving wonder, as well it might. He had contemporary knowledge, but the Holkham archives have revealed certain details of which, perhaps, he was ignorant.

CHAPTER XXXVI

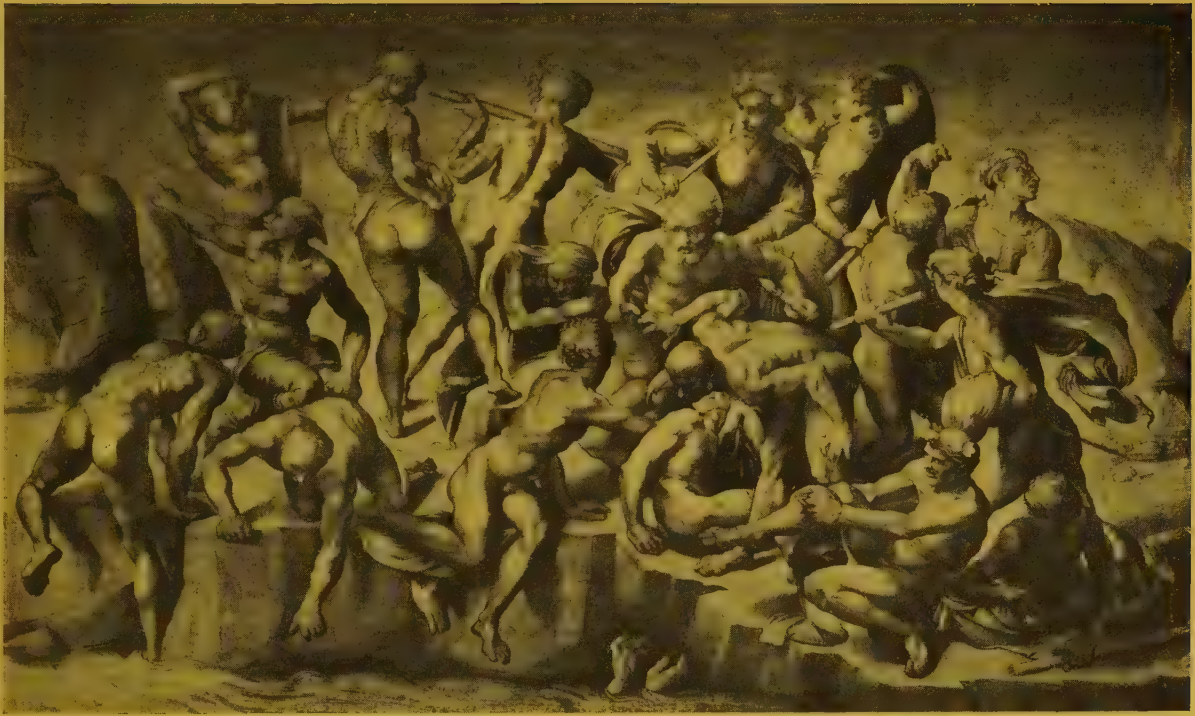
THE BRETTINGHAMS

AT the beginning of his building operations, Lord Leicester had engaged as clerk of the works, to direct the carrying out of Mr. Kent's designs, a Norwich architect, Mr. Matthew Brettingham, who had a room in the old house, and afterwards in the new, and was paid £50 a year. "Provisions for Mr. Brettingham" is a frequent entry in the accounts, and his comfort was seen to by Mrs. Ann Coats, whose duty it was to look after Lady Leicester's menagerie, and to feed Cæsar and Minny, and the five other little dogs. A receipt for his salary in 1757 exists: "Fifty pounds for a years salary for taking care of his Lordship's buildings at Holkham." He continued as clerk, or surveyor of the works, as he is sometimes styled, until the house was finished. No doubt he was an important person—Lord Leicester once wrote of him as "the great Mr. Brettingham." On Lord Leicester's death, he seems to have persuaded Lady Leicester to double his salary. Two years after that melancholy event, he published a large folio volume, "The Plans, Elevations and Sections of Holkham in Norfolk, the seat of the late Earl of Leicester, by Matthew Brettingham, London, printed by Haberkorn, printer in Grafton St., St. Anne's Soho, MDCCLXI."

He dedicates it, fulsomely, to the Duke of Cumberland, saying that "the many monuments of Magnificence erected by Your Royal Highness at Windsor were powerful inducements with the Earl of Leicester to persevere in the accomplishment of a plan which he had formed to publish the plans of his house."

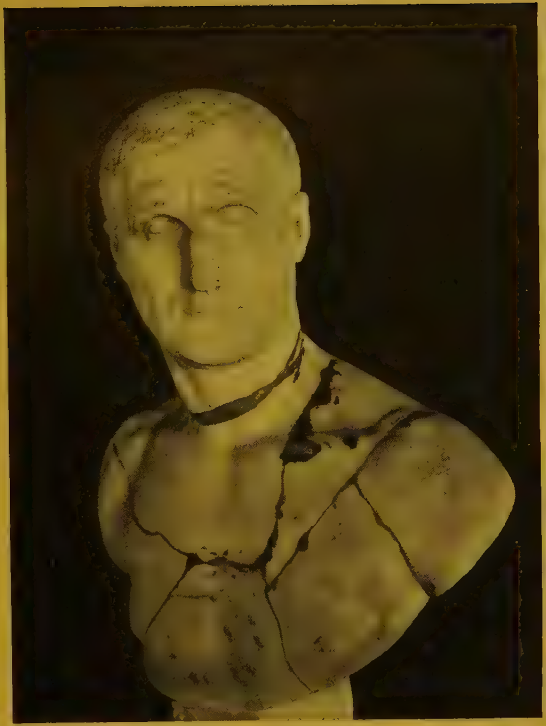
In a preface he reaffirms this intention of his lordship, which had been stopped only by his sudden death, and goes on: "In gratitude to the Earl of Leicester's memory, in whose service I spent the best and greatest part of my life, thirty years, in the study and execution of these works, I have, at no small expense and trouble to myself, continued the engraving of them, that posterity might see the truly fine taste of the noble founder of Holkham. . . ." He then gives the plans, and all of them except the obelisk, the garden-seat, the east and south lodges, the triumphal arch, the west entrance to the park, and the dove-house, are attributed to *"Matthew Brettingham, Architect!" Not once does he mention the real architect, William Kent!* or mention that he himself was employed only "to take care of his Lordship's works." He thus takes the credit to himself for the whole of the magnificent house, outside and inside, its plan and its decoration. Fortunately, Kent left behind him a book of plans and drawings for the house in his own hand and with his own annotations which "shame Mr. Brettingham's bragian words." But even supposing that these had perished, we have on record Lord Leicester's constant references to Mr. Kent as his great master and co-architect. What vanity led his surveyor of the works to wish to pose before the world as the designer of Holkham it is impossible to say. It is but fair to say, however, that when left to himself, he could design a good house, as Norfolk House and some others remain to testify. No doubt he did Kent's "spade" work, drawing out the plans to scale, and preparing everything for the builders. The great designers always left such matters to a subordinate. But Mr. Brettingham was not the architect of Holkham, as he wished the world to believe.

Now, Mr. Matthew Brettingham had a son, also named Matthew, and he was as much trusted by Lord Leicester as his father. For, from a manuscript notebook in the autograph of this younger Matthew, it seems that in 1747 he went to Italy, Germany, and Holland, commissioned to buy statues and pictures for his lordship. He bought a few, also, for his father and some two or three persons. No doubt Lord Leicester paid a large portion of the expense of his tour. The book begins: "On account of Monies Received on My Lord the Earl of Leicester's account and of my Father's, Beginning from my first setting out of England, August 1747." He remained in Rome until the end of 1754, and during those years he despatched to Holkham a number of statues and busts, antique mosaic and marbles for tables, also pictures, drawings and



MICHAEL ANGELO'S CARTOON OF PISA.

Contemporary copy at Holkham.



A ROMAN PATRICIAN.

Statue Gallery, Holkham.

THUCYDIDES.

Statue Gallery, Holkham.

By permission of Professor Poulsen.

books. Among his more fortunate purchases were those of the fine busts of Thucydides and a Roman Patrician (he called them Metrodorus and Seneca), and the herm of Plato of which Professor Poulsen has written enthusiastically. He also bought the Great Faun, and the colossal bust of Venus (so much admired by Michaelis), the Meleager, Neptune, Venus of the Gardens, the two smaller fauns which adorn the Statue Gallery, and others not so good. So he must be held to have acquitted himself of his commission with credit, since his addition of marbles to those already collected by Lord Leicester himself has resulted in so great an authority as Professor Poulsen saying that "Holkham holds the first place among English private collections, and is rich in fine specimens." But he got into the hands of that despicable sculptor Cavaceppi, who sold him two clever forgeries as antique busts, and, if Brettingham is right, provided a head and arm for Lord Leicester's beautiful Diana which are totally unworthy of that famous figure. As regards pictures he certainly made a *coup* when he bought the *chiaroscuro* of Michael Angelo's cartoon of Pisa, for it is the only known copy of that celebrated but no longer existing picture. One reads, grievingly, that he sent four landscapes by R. Wilson, which cost only 8 zecchins each—the "Pons Rimini," "Sources of Clitumnus," and two of Tivoli, for they are not at Holkham now. What can Lord Leicester have been thinking of when he gave them away, as I suppose he must have done! Brettingham sent a few busts and casts to Lord Dartmouth, but the most interesting purchases not made for Holkham were those for "Sir Wm. Stonheyres"—who was he?—which include "Original Model of Moses, and 2 small figures in wax and a Torso by Michael Angelo, a Bronze of Neptune by Bernini, and a Samson by Sansovino."

But Mr. Brettingham the younger chiefly occupied himself in obtaining moulds from which plaster casts could be made of famous statues and busts, and he studied architecture. On his return to England he writes to a Mr. Ralph Howard of Dublin, whom he had known at Rome, about these treasures: "Before I commence Architect, I must dispatch my undertaking concerning the moulds of Antique Statues etc. . . . Busts will be 2 guineas a piece but subscribers for a set of 30 will be charged only 50 guineas. A set of Statues will be 300 guineas. Lord Leicester has guaranteed the sale of Six sets, one of which is for Holkham." A rough draft of another letter sets forth a plan of Mr. Brettingham's for building a fine Classical Room in London, for the exhibition of these casts. A Venetian Abbé has prevailed on the Pope to permit moulds to be made of all the famous marbles, ancient and modern, in Rome, and when His Holiness has got his set, the Abbé will contract to supply Brettingham. "If our noble Patrons and Friends would raise £3,500, such a Hall could be built, and Taste in England be vastly improved thereby. Do you think it would be necessary to ask my Lord Leicester to be the Protector or Magnate of the Undertaking, or may we avoid having any Signior to eclipse our glory?"

Mr. Brettingham the younger commenced architect, but, beyond his purchases of works of art, Holkham is chiefly concerned with the fact that when his father was dead, he brought out, in 1773, a very fine folio of "Plans and Elevations of Holkham, ceilings, chimney pieces, etc." (London: T. Spilsbury). He begins with a dedication to Lady Leicester, "to whose munificence the book owes its publication, and at whose command the designs have been delineated." In a long preface he admits that "the general ideas of the Plans, etc. were first struck out by the Earls of Burlington and Leicester, assisted by Mr. Wm. Kent."

But he contrives to belittle Kent's share in the architecture of Holkham as much as possible. "So many alterations took place, that very few traces of the original thoughts remain untouched." He says that only the Family Wing was finished from Kent's designs, "without undergoing material change," and that the stone bridge, the obelisk, the temple, the seat on the Mount, the arches to the pleasure-garden and the triumphal arch, though "deduced from sketches by Mr. Kent, were executed with considerable alterations made in the designs." Then he goes on: "The care of proportioning the parts at large, and the detail of each member of the buildings in particular, was committed by the Earl of Leicester to *his own Architect the late Mr. Matthew Brettingham of Norwich. . . .*" In the plans, the architect is said, as in the earlier book, to be Matthew Brettingham, except in those of the Hall, which is "From the Antique of Desgodetz & Palladio"; a few ceilings and fireplaces are allowed to be by Kent, the rest are by Inigo Jones or Lord Burlington. He does not say who adapted them from Inigo Jones! Let anyone who knows Holkham today compare Kent's drawings with the house as they see it now, and say if the alterations are so great that Brettingham, not Kent, must be considered the real architect. Why Lady Leicester permitted these plans to be published with the name of Brettingham as architect, is a puzzle. Had she disliked Kent, and preferred the more subservient Brettingham? Or had she been kept out of the counsels of the architects? Was she accustomed to think more of Cæsar and Minny, and her storks in the garden, and the pheasants in her aviary? Kent and Lord Leicester had been in constant friendship from 1716 to 1748. It is impossible to suppose that all the plans had not been settled between them. In 1736, Lord Leicester had said: "We must now begin to think of the inside of the rooms." Surely the interior decorations and much of the furniture were planned during the remaining twelve years of Kent's life. The "surveyor of the works" certainly carried out his instructions well and solidly, and we owe our knowledge of several interesting details about the house to him and his son. But Kent's was the master-mind, and the fine taste was Lord Leicester's.

CHAPTER XXXVII

MARGARET COUNTESS OF LEICESTER—THE REIGN OF THE WIDOW

LADY LEICESTER arranged her furniture and hung up her pictures, sending some family portraits to Beckhall as "too bad to be hung at Holkham, the Duchess of York's face broke." These have disappeared entirely. She was diligent in making inventories, and was specially careful that posterity should know what furniture she had bought with her own money. An industrious, careful woman. How well could the present generation have spared the six full-length ancestors ordered by her husband from Casali, in favour of the older portraits which were sent away. Casali was paid 50 guineas apiece for them—a prodigious price, when it is considered that Cipriani, a better painter, had only £20 for the two saints he added to the Chapel altarpiece. Mrs. Delany, visiting Fonthill, saw "Vandykes mixed up with daubs by Casali." He was something of an impostor, surely, and there is an amusing letter about him quoted in *Country Life*, February 17, 1923, in an article on Burley-on-the-Hill. Lady Charlotte Fermor, describing a visit to Wanstead in 1743, wrote: "We all danced to our own singing, in order to teach Signor Casali English Country Dances. He is a painter, and painting pictures for the Salon; but, I fancy, as low-born as they generally are, though by means of an Order he wears, set in diamonds (which he tells them was given him by the King of Prussia, which very few people have), and some fine suits of clothes, he passes for the most complete fine gentleman in the world, and is treated on an equal footing with the rest of the company."

Lord and Lady Leicester seem to have been easily deceived by plausible manners, since the Brettinghams, Cauldwell, and Casali took them in so easily.

Pictures and furniture have been so frequently moved about, and so many of the rooms have had their walls re-hung, and their chairs re-covered, that Lady Leicester would recognise some of them with difficulty until her eye lighted on some of Mr. Marsden's fine carvings. But with the aid of her minute inventories, it is possible to imagine what the rooms looked like in her day. A good deal of the old furniture has disappeared, some of it replaced in Regency and Victorian times. It is impossible not to regret the loss of the reading-stands in Library and Gallery; doubtless they resembled those in the Library of All Souls. But much of Kent's furniture remains, and the house was probably as comfortable as it was magnificent, when Lady Leicester began to invite friends to stay with her. Among these were Lord Hardwicke, the Chancellor, her husband's friend, and his brother Charles Yorke and his wife. Several letters to the Yorkes remain among the Hardwicke Papers in the British Museum to show Lady Leicester's style. In one written from Holkham, October 26, 1765, she hopes that Mr. and Mrs. Yorke reached "Wimples" safely, and that they will again visit Holkham, "if this quiet resort can be entertaining to those engag'd in the busy and great world. The world certainly improves in Malice which a superior Genius must expect the greatest share of . . . I am endeavouring to improve my Plantations, that if I have the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Yorke here again, she may have greater variety of scenes to amuse her pencil, and do honour to the place by her drawings. The views will be made more beautiful by her pencil. . . ."

In another, she hopes Mr. and Mrs. Yorke are safely arrived at Tittenhanger. Mrs. Charles Yorke's mother was daughter of Sir Thomas Blount, of Tittenhanger. I wonder if Lady Leicester knew that her father-in-law, Edward Coke, and dear Cary, had once rented it. "Mr. Yorke's Pad is much better, and Lady L. is assured will not be the worse for the accident. The Pheasants attend Mrs. Yorke's commands. Admiral Forbes and Lady Mary left Holkham yesterday."

Again Lady Leicester writes to Charles Yorke, in 1767: "You flatter me extremely in telling me you are so obliging as to think you are a part of my family, which I hope is a Proof you are quite at your ease when here, and will incourage you to repeat that favour as long as I am Possessour of this Habitation. Our County Meeting is over; Mr. Coke being nominated a Candidate surprised me, as he sent me no notice of his design."

To a lady who was the titular head of the family, and had been brought up under Queen Anne, Mr. Coke's omission must have seemed very rude. Sir Walter Elliot (in "Persuasion") would never have been guilty of such neglect, for does not Mary Musgrove say, even of their second cousins, "Nothing ever happened on either side that was not immediately announced"? Lady Leicester was cold towards her successor, though she was perfectly fair to him, for she writes, on hearing of his chagrin at her being left the Grand Estate for life: "I know nothing of Mr. Coke, but as a common acquaintance believed him a very good sort of man. If he was disappointed, I did not wonder at it: but as I had not taken any clandestine means to get the Estate, I should make myself easy on that article." An echo of the unfortunate story of Lord Coke's marriage is revived on reading a letter to Charles Yorke (he was Attorney-General, and became Lord Chancellor, but died three days later), desiring his opinion relating to "the claim Lord Leicester's executors have on John Duke of Argyll's personal estate at the Dutchess' death as a Part of Lady Mary Coke's Portion. I find they intend disputing a share of the Plate which on the marriage was understood to be Lord Leicester's after her decease."

I think no plate at Holkham bears the Campbell arms; but then, most of the older plate was melted down, or exchanged for modern magnificence in early Victorian times.

It is to Lady Leicester's credit that she was not unmindful of her husband's marvellous collection of ancient manuscripts and books. These had been kept at the house in Great Russell Street, where they were accessible to scholars. Now they were transferred to one of the Tower Rooms and a high corridor at Holkham, the printed books travelling by sea to Wells, the manuscripts, as more valuable, by land. She lent manuscripts to learned men when required. In 1766 she writes to a Mr. Harling:

"SIR,

"I send you the account of the MSS. in my Library relating to the Irish War, one of which Dr. Warner mentioned to Ld. Bessborough he should be glad to borrow; the third volume, which is wanting, Ld. Hardwicke desired to have 3 years ago, and is not returned, if that is part of the history Dr. Warner wants, I will send to Ld. Hardwicke for it."

Dr. Warner was probably Ferdinando Warner, Rector of Barnes, author of a "History of the Rebellion and Civil War in Ireland," published in 1767, of which the "Dictionary of National Biography" says, "an impartial and singularly accurate work." So it may be assumed that he obtained the loan of the desired volume. He also published a book of "Instructions for the Relief of Gout," and died immediately afterwards of that disorder, and thus "destroyed the credit of his system."

In 1769 she sent her Hebrew manuscripts to the learned Dr. Kennicott at Oxford; and in 1773 she caused an inventory, not quite complete, to be made of the chief manuscripts. This was afterwards seen and copied for Sir Thomas Philipps.

One of her last letters in 1774 was to the second Earl of Hardwicke, to whom she sent "her most respectful compliments and thanks for the Book he has honoured her with, which she esteems as a valuable addition to the Library at Holkham, and an ornament to it"; she flatters herself with the hope of seeing his lordship there.

This letter is docketed by Lord Hardwicke: "This was a present of my edition of Sir Dudley Carleton's Letters, in return for a present of the Engravings of Holkham which had been published at her ladyship's expense."

Of Lady Leicester's kindness of heart, and desire to do her duty as a "great lady," Mrs. Poyntz gives a pleasant account to her daughter, Lady Spencer, in letters written from North Creake in 1766:

"Yesterday, Lady Leicester came to me to the astonishment of all this country, for she goes nowhere. She brought me the finest carp, tench, and perch, and before had given me some venison: she does great good, keeps many families, but is only beloved by the poor, and she will not mix with the people here. Her table is very handsome, and her behaviour to all that come very proper. . . . She told me if Sir Mordaunt and Lady Martin would like to come to her, she would be glad to see them, but as they had no home of their own, she hoped they would excuse an old woman that did not love to go abroad from coming to thank them for their company. . . . Lady Leicester is for ever sending us good things, yesterday a monster pike and nine pairs of large soles, she loads us with sweatmeats for the child, and is always saying or doing something obliging to us. . . . Holkham is really worth your seeing: Tuesday is the day they show the House, Thursday is her publick day, and it is her delight to show the House; she told me if my Lord and you ever came to Norfolk, she flattered herself she should see you some Thursday; you will find an elegant good dinner, for she is very well served, and there is no fuss; her behaviour I think civil and pleasant."

The account given by Mrs. Lybbe Powys in her interesting Diary of her visit to Holkham in 1756, ten years before Mrs. Poyntz, shows that it was Lady Leicester's personal care which resulted in such excellent dinners being given at Holkham. She notes the various splendours of the staterooms, and inspects "such an amazing large and good Kitchen as I never saw, everything in it so nice and clever: but I've heard Mr. Jackson talk of Lady Leicester's great notability: they are there often, for a week together: she never misses going round this wing every morning, and one day he was walking by the windows, and saw her Ladyship in her Kitchen at six o'clock (a.m.) thinking all her guests in bed, I suppose. Her dairy is the neatest place you can imagine, the whole marble . . . the butter made into such pretty patts hardly larger than a sixpence. . . . We had a breakfast at Holkham in the genteelest taste, with all kinds of cake and fruit, placed undesired in an apartment we were to go through, which, as the family were from home, I thought very clever in the housekeeper. . . ." Prudent housekeeper! Was she perhaps the same housekeeper who in 1747, as Horace Walpole has told us, showed Holkham to Lord Bath and his Countess, and Lord Pulteney, when "they forgot to give anything to the servants, but upon recollection and deliberation, they sent back a servant six miles, with—half a crown."

The Duchess of Portland having been delighted with her visit to Holkham, it was natural she should wish her dear Mrs. Delany to see it also. And this was easy, from Mrs. Delany's friendship with Lady Leicester's younger sister, Lady Gower. Although she was seventy-four, and November was rather late to be setting out for the remotest part of Norfolk, Mrs. Delany went to Holkham, in 1774, and wrote as enthusiastically of its beauty to her famous friend Mrs. Boscawen as that lady's husband had written to his wife in 1757. "The lady Duchess" mentioned was the Duchess of Portland, whose mother, Countess of Oxford, was first cousin to Lady Leicester, through their descent from Henry Cavendish, second Duke of Newcastle.

"Holkham,
"15*th Nov.* 1774.

". . . Volumes might be filled with what I see daily in this magnificent palace, but I am unequal to the description, and more likely to tell you how I wander about it, *losing my way*. Lady Leicester is often so good to be my guide, and today show'd me a shorter way to my apartment, but it has to me been a new *égarement, another way to wander*. When I am bound to the Library, I find a bed chamber: in short I walk many a furlong (I had almost said mile) that I do not intend, but everywhere such objects present themselves—such pictures, such statues—that I willingly halt on the road, whether the right or the wrong."

She and Lady Gower had passed by Houghton "whose immense plantations gave me a greater respect for Sir Robert than I had ever entertained for him when he ruled these realms." She goes on:

"The country all round is *entirely bare*, as if there was some *strict law* that *not a tree, not a shrub* should shade *the turnips*. . . . Here also are great plantations, but no very old trees like the beeches of Bulstrode, but a great extent of plantations enough to inform the country that trees *will grow in Norfolk*. . . . Here is a lake that charms me very much, and seems to me to be much the most beautiful feature of the *dehors:* I am not, however, able to judge, not having as yet been in a carriage, except to church on Sunday. My Lady Duchess will tell you how advantageously the Church is mounted on a round hill which commands a prospect of the Sea: but perhaps Her Grace did not see in what manner her noble Cousin has repaired and beautifyed this Church . . . The inside is striking, all new work of Lady Leicester's, the cost £11,000, so that you may believe it complete. . . . I learnt of Lady Leicester that you had never been here. I think you *must* come, I don't say in winter, for her ladyship tells me there is *nothing* between her and *Norway*, but in Summer you would be well entertained. There is one room called the landscape room, full of Claudes and Vernets that wou'd please you well. Other pictures, especially the Duke d'Aremberg by Vandyke, and two Pietro Cortono's [*sic*] I leave to my Lady Duchess to describe to you. I know both her Grace and you will be glad to hear these noble ladies enjoy perfect health. I think it is curious to see my Lady Leicester work at a tent-stitch frame every night by *one candle* that she sets upon it, and *no spectacles,* It is a carpet she works in shades—tent-stitch. Lady Gower and I walk out every day at noon, often Ly. L. is of the party, and seems to be a very good walker. They are both vastly kind to me, and I am exceedingly obliged to them."

Old Lady Leicester might walk well, and do her tent-stitch without spectacles, but two months after this visit, she was taken very ill, and sent for Lady Gower, as Mrs. Delany tells her niece, Mrs. Port, writing on February 28, 1775:

"Last Friday, Dowr. Lady Gower was with me till 11 at night; went to bed as soon as she went home: at 12 was called by an express that came from Holcomb to say that Lady Leicester was very ill, and to desire her to come to her directly. She set out as soon as it was day. We have heard no particulars and can expect none till to-morrow at soonest. My poor Mrs. Montagu is in great distress: she loves these sisters mightily! it has been a friendship of about fifty years standing."

It is to be feared that Lady Gower did not reach Holkham in time, for travelling was slow and Lady Leicester died on February 28. We know no particulars of her death, and Mrs. Delany's letters show that Lady Gower was no gossip.

"*10th March*, 1775.

"Lady Gower is come to town, but sees no body, nor receives any messages . . . the title of Clifford which Lady Leicester had, is now in abeyance."

"St. James' Place,
"*12th March*, 1775.

"Lady Leicester's will [is] not yet declared by Lady Gower, but as she and her sister always lived in strict friendship, and there is no other sister, it is generally supposed that Lady L. has left everything that was in her power to Dowr. Lady Gower, and to Mr. Leveson after her. Some say 20, others 40 thousand pounds. I hear Mr. Cook [Wenman Roberts-Coke] *complains* that he must buy cattle to stock his grounds, *and even cart-horses,* very hard indeed for a man who comes into the finest and best furnished house in England, with seventeen thousand pounds a year! Lady Leicester has laid out *many* thousand pounds she was *not* obliged to do in furnishing the house, and more than she was requested to do by Lord Leicester when he died, for he left it unfinished. Besides, she allowed young Mr. Coke for travelling expenses, five hundred a year, so that the present possessor of Holkham is very *ungrateful indeed* to complain."

"*28th March.*

"Lady Leicester has left Mrs. Montagu, Hanr. Square, two hundred guineas."

"*6th April.*

"Nobody has yet seen Dowr. Lady Gower, or knows from her the particulars of Lady Leicester's will: but from the Cooks, they say she has left £6000 among nephews and nieces, and the residue to Lady Gower, amounting to £40,000.

"St. J[ames's] P.[lace],
"*29th July,* 1775.

"Lady Gower is waiting in town to put in her claim to the peerage of Clifton [she means Clifford] now in abeyance: I hope she will get it; tho' Mr. Southwell has been very vigilant in his pursuit of it, before Lady G. took a step toward it."

In 1776, the barony was conferred upon Edward Southwell, grandson of Lady Catherine Tufton, Lady Sondes, eldest sister of Lady Leicester. Had Lady Gower been successful in her claim, the barony would have descended to her son, Hon. John Leveson-Gower, who married Mrs. Boscawen's eldest daughter.

Mrs. Boscawen to Mrs. Delany.

"*Oct.* 18, 1775.

"Lady Gower may indeed despair of the barony (long since surely) but I do *not* think she cares much about it. I have thought her spirits much sunk since her loss of Lady Leicester. . . ."

Her Will shows that Lady Leicester bequeathed about £14,000 to relations; but we do not know how much the residue amounted to. She had spent about as much or more on the house and the church. As she says she had only £8,000 from her father, she must have saved the rest out of her income during her long widowhood. She made Lady Gower her residuary legatee, and gave her £8,000, her house and furniture in Hanover Square, and all her own jewels, plate, linen, glass, and books; also, her coaches, horses, housekeeping stores, her cellar of wine, and all her cattle and sheep at Holkham and Elmham—and that was what Wenman complained of, as Mrs. Delany heard. What were his feelings when he learned that in her Will Lady Leicester had written: "Some of these things above named I would have left to Wenman Coke, Esq. . . . if his conduct to me had been such as I had just cause to expect." Was that omission to announce to her his nomination for Norfolk but one act of disrespect among many? Had Wenman been so foolish as to let Lady Leicester see his displeasure that the estates had come to her in 1759 and not to him? She left all the furniture at Holkham bought with her own money to go as heirlooms with the house; but, "If Wenman Coke Esq. ever raises any dispute with my executrix [Lady Gower] or make any claim on my assets, then my executrix shall remove all my furniture . . . and I will it to her for her own use."

To Mr. Cauldwell she left £2,000, and to various nieces £1,000. There were generous bequests to servants, and to her great-nephew, Thomas William Coke, to whom she had given £500 a year for his "Grand Tour," she left "all my linen at Holkham marked with the letter 'L,' but no other: all my desert frames and glasses at Holkham, and all the blue and white china, but no other, also the chrystal branches for lighting the Gallery at Holkham."

So rumour said truly that Lady Gower got the chief share of the Dowager's property. Of what value Lady Leicester's personal jewels and plate may have been there is nothing to show, but a list remains of the "family" jewels which went as heirlooms to Wenman, and very magnificent they were. None of them, however, are now at Holkham—not even Cary's beautiful necklace of forty-four pearls which, even in 1707, were valued at £400.

Wenman enjoyed his inheritance barely a year, and then a new era for Holkham was inaugurated by the succession of his son Thomas William, whose life has been written by Mrs. Stirling.

* * * * *

And now, good-bye to the Cokes of older days. To the strong, self-willed Cokes, such as the old Chief Justice, and his sons John of Holkham, and fiery Clement, and Henry, and that splendid, able, cultivated descendant of Henry's, Sir Thomas, first Earl of Leicester. To Sir Robert, and young John, and Robert the second, and Edward, whose characters seem to have been weak rather than strong, not forgetting the wives—much loved Bridget Paston, gifted Theophila Berkeley, notable Meriel Wheatley, foolish Lady Ann, and charming, gentle Cary. Also to devout, strong-minded Anne

Sadleir, and that "very religious gentlewoman" Bridget Skinner—the only ladies of "the blood" about whom we know more than that they were born and married and died, unless Ann Roberts be excepted, from whom the present Cokes descend. And all we know of her, beyond the momentous fact that she provided a son and heir, is that she showed something of the Coke determination when, at sixteen, she ran away with her handsome Life Guardsman, Phillip Roberts. Her grandson, Thomas William, showed such Coke-like qualities of leadership that he was called "King Tom"; and her great-grandson, the late Lord Leicester, was credited with being, like Clement, a thorough "chip of the old block."

On the whole, it should seem that the Coke character had proved more permanent than the Roberts. That remarkable man whose birth at Mileham in 1552 set the gossips a-prophesying, transmitted a good deal of his own force of character through the generations to Sir Thomas, first Earl of Leicester, and now, in 1928, the spirit of the old ancestor is not spent.

Norfolk has given many illustrious men to our country, but it might not be easy to name another of its families which has produced more powerful personalities than the Cokes.

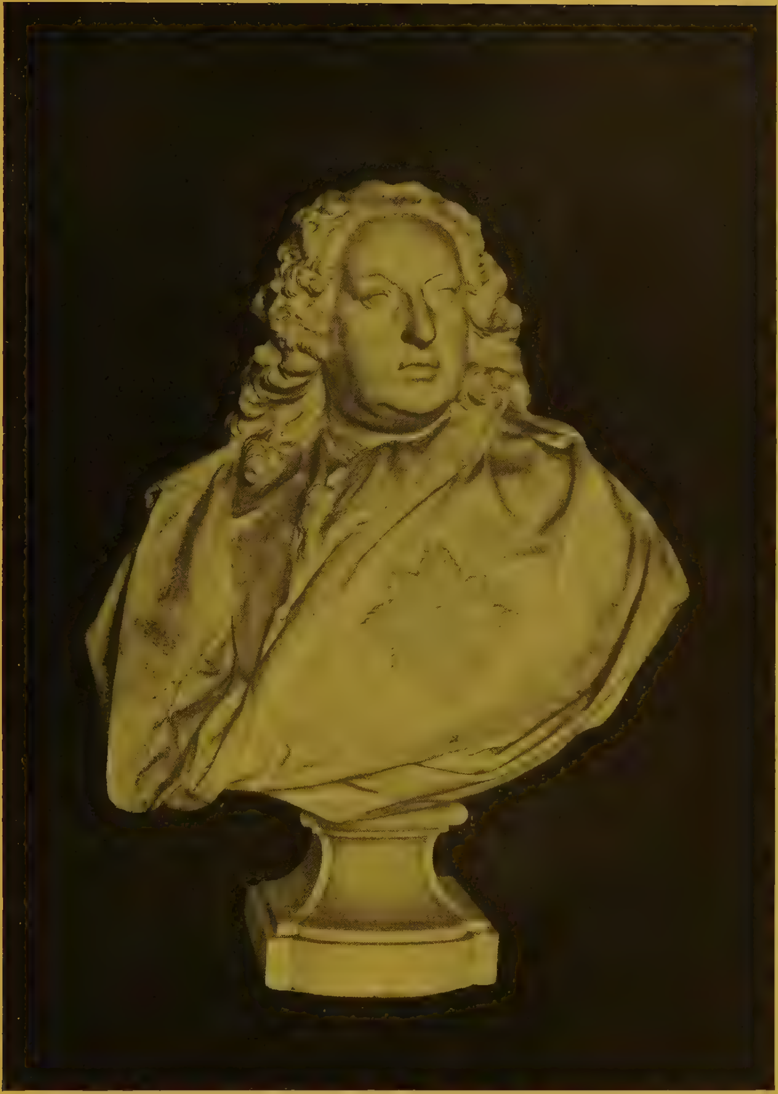
May the race continue to flourish, as able, and as determined in the pursuit of right, as the Chief Justice, even if its chiefs cannot be as learned in the Law as he was; and may they be free from those defects which have been lamented in him. May they ever cherish the splendid home which Thomas Coke's genius and sense of beauty has given them for their heritage, and preserve its glories intact. Not all the Cokes have remembered the Chief Justice's stern sentence upon any heir-male "who shall endeavour to do . . . any act whereby any of my possessions shall be transferred or vested in any other person."

What was it that he said?

"I pronounce such person so endeavouring to be ungrate and unthankful to such an affectionate, loving, and provident ancestor."

Had it not been for Sir Edward, that great Elizabethan, the Cokes of today might still be at Mileham and nowhere else: and though it was he who won for them their broad acres, had it not been for eighteenth-century Sir Thomas, they would not have owned, as their dwelling, the present Holkham—a possession in many respects unrivalled in England.

Let them remember what they owe to these ancestors, and never, never be "ungrate."



THOMAS COKE (1697-1759), LORD LOVELL AND EARL OF LEICESTER.

By Roubiliac.

APPENDIX I

SIR EDWARD COKE'S INTEREST IN HERALDRY AND GENEALOGY

SIR EDWARD COKE took great interest in the story of his ancestors, and that of the families to which he was allied, and generally in genealogical and heraldic studies. His library catalogue shows that he possessed some fourteen manuscripts of "herauldry," nine printed works on the subject, and twenty pedigrees, including two of his own family—"one collected and allowed by Sir William Dethick, King of Armes, the other by Mr. Camden, and severally subscribed by them; of that by Camden there is a duplicate." Dethick's pedigree has disappeared, but those by Camden are now at Holkham, and very elaborate and splendid they are. The later of these is much fuller than the earlier, and has many annotations in Coke's fine script. His last entry seems to have been that of Henry Coke's son, Richard, born 1626, and this is specially interesting, for it is from this Richard that the present race of Cokes descend.

In the pedigree, the families of Knightley, Paston, and Sparham are given in three parallel columns, together with such generations of Neirford or Narford, Jernemuthe (Yarmouth), and Folcard, as are necessary, and thus it is shown how these ancient streams flow into and tinge with azure the blood of Edward and Bridget's offspring.

In the course of the pedigree Camden has coloured some ninety-seven coats of arms (some coats frequently reappear) and at the end, three specimens of Sir Edward Coke's own shield—a large one, quartering (1) Coke, (2) Crispinge, (3) Folcard, (4) Sparham, (5) Narford, (6) Jernemuthe, (7) Knightlie, (8) Pawe, flanked on the left by a shield of twenty-four quarterings, and on the right by one of forty.

Robert Coke, of Mileham, father of the Chief Justice, had a Grant of Arms from Thomas Hawley, Clarencieux, June 9, 1555: "Argent, a chevron engrailed gules between 3 Tiger's heads erased, open mouthed, dented argent, langued gules, about each neck a gemel, or. Crest, on a torce argent, a Turkey Cock proper." But Sir Edward finding different arms, "Per pale, gules and azure, three eagles displayed, argent," on seals to certain old family documents which Camden had unearthed, reverted to these ancient arms. He assumed as his crest, an "ostrich argent, on a chapeau azure turned up ermine, holding in its beak a horseshoe, or," with the motto "Prudens qui patiens." Sir Edward would have been gratified by the compliment paid him by old Guillim, who says he prefers to blazon his coat "Ruby and Saphir" instead of "Gules and azure," the precious stones "being emblematic of his virtues."

Next comes a list of manors, fifteen of them, and some lands formerly possessed by Sir Edward's ancestors, and now in his possession. These he had brought back into the Coke family by purchase. Finally, there is the elaborate certificate in Camden's hand that the pedigree had been compiled by the authority of many evidences and muniments with their seals, which he had personally seen and examined. To this Sir Edward has added with his own hand an anagram: "Deo Duce, ευρηκα;" and "To hym that shall be my heire at the time of my decease,

> 'Disce, heres, virtutem ex me verosque labores,
> Fortunam ex aliis. . . .'"

These may be translated "God being my Guide, I have found"; and

> "O my heir, learn virtue and righteous toil from me,
> Learn Fortune from others."

Specimens of the documents on which Camden relied are transcribed, with reproductions of their seals, and given in the course of the pedigree. One of them is concerned with a certain Sir Thomas Coke, who was a distinguished soldier in the service of King Edward III. Camden believed him to be great-grandfather to one Robert Coke (who married Alicia Folcard, a descendant and heiress of the Sparhams), and this Robert was great-great-great-grandfather of Sir Edward Coke, the Chief Justice. The pedigree as first drawn up begins with this Sir Thomas Coke, but on a piece of parchment, afterwards added to the scroll, it is carried up through five generations, to "Gulielmus Coke, married Felicia, 8 John."

Mr. Walter Rye pours scorn upon the claim of Camden and Sir Edward Coke that the latter descended from the old Cokes who were found living at Didlington (as he is willing to admit) in the thirteenth century. Camden quotes documents, however, which show that these old Cokes possessed lands and houses in the small parish of Whitewell, Norfolk, and then produces others which show that later Cokes, who were certainly ancestors of Sir Edward, also possessed land and houses in that parish. This is not proof that the later owners were of the same family as the earlier, but Camden evidently thought the coincidence of ownership practically amounted to proof.

APPENDIX II

SIR EDWARD COKE'S POSSESSIONS IN MANORS AND LANDS

MR. CARTHEW in his invaluable "Hundred of Launditch" gives a long list of manors and lands acquired by Sir Edward Coke, and concludes, "so that he died possessed of upwards sixty manors, and his property extended into nearly one hundred parishes." In the Manuscript Library at Holkham is preserved a great volume of "Conveyances, Titles, Tenures, and other Necessary Legal Observations, and all the Manors, Lands, and Tenements, necessarie for the posterity of Sir Edward Coke, and collected by him for their quiet and benefit." Two copies were made of this valuable record—"one of parchmant, the other of paper," but only the copy in parchment has survived at Holkham. The index of this book shows ninety-nine separate purchases of manors, lands, tenements, and advowsons. Here is a list of some of the more important purchases, with dates, and, when possible, the price paid, and the name of the former owner. The well-known story that when King James desired Sir Edward to buy no more land, Sir Edward petitioned to be allowed to buy "one more acre," and proceeded to buy the acre, which was the large estate of Castle Acre, may or may not be true. Mr. Carthew thinks there may be some foundation for it. Lord Campbell's statement that Castle Acre was equal in extent to all that Sir Edward had previously purchased is, of course, absurd, and his denunciation of Coke as a grasping, ambitious, money-loving pedant, comes with little grace from one who was himself a very pushing, ambitious person. But that Castle Acre was not, as is frequently asserted, his last purchase of land, is shown by the "Great Book," which records the purchase of Longford, Derby, in July, 1616, for £5,000, one month after Castle Acre was bought, and £1,000 paid in 1618 for the Manor of Cokeley, two years after the purchase of Castle Acre. In Cokeley Church he had been married to his incomparable Bridget, thirty-six years before, so that reasons of sentiment urged him, no doubt, to this final purchase.

Lysons says that Sir Edward bought Stoke House, Buckinghamshire, where he died, in 1620, but Lysons cannot have seen the "Great Book," which shows that Stoke "with all its tenements had been bought for £4,000, in 1599. It was one of the properties settled on Lady Elizabeth, Sir Edward's second wife, and her heirs, and so it eventually came to her daughter, Lady Purbeck, and the main line of Cokes had no more to do with it. Two pairs of iron gates decorated with the ostrich crest were still to be seen a few years ago in the grounds of Stoke, mute witnesses to the residence there of a great man.

MANORS AND LANDS.

1576. Tittleshall Austens. £5. Robert Austen, *alias* Reeve, yeoman.
1580. Godwick. £3,600. John and Robert Drewry.
1585. Thorington Hall. £1,100. Edmund Moulton. (Bridget Paston's mother was a Moulton.)
1585. House in Bevis Marks. £340. Sir Robert Wingfield.
1587. Pitsey. £1,260. Earl of Arundel.
1592. Thorington Wimples, etc. £2,500. Anthony Wingfield.
1592. Wellingham Weasenham, Toftrees. £1,900. Edward Stanupe.
1596. Cippenham (Bucks). £4,200. Lord Burghley.
1598. Elmham. £6,200. Edward, Lord Cromwell.
1599. Stoke Pogeis. £4,000. Katherine, Countess of Huntingdon.
1600. Wherstead Hall. £1,400. William Barrow.
1602. Minster Lovell. £5,000. Earl of Bedford.
1606. Okeford and Shillingston (Dorset). £3,300. Sir William Ross.
1606. Beck and Beck Hall. £3,200. Thomas Curzon, of Belaugh.
1607. Baylies, near Stoke. £900. Edmund Fitton.
1609. Bournehall (Wherstead). £1,600. Thomas Hall.
1609. Manor and Rectory, Wood Ditton (Cambs). £2,350. Earl of Suffolk.
1609. Bishops Cleave Advowson, "for a competent some of money." Sir Christofer Hatton.
1609. Aldham Hall (Suffolk). £3,800. Thomas Tylney.
1610. Knightleys (Staffs). £5,300. Sir Francis Lacon, of Kinlet, Co. Salop. Here the Knightleys had their origin.
1610. Holkham Neales, Lucas, etc. £3,400. William Armiger.
1610. Longham Priors. Watlington (Norfolk). £2,800. Arthur Futter.
1611. Thorington. £1,100. Sir Edward Clere, of Ormsby.
1611. Huntingfield Hall and Park. £4,500. Lord Hunsdon.
1612. Sparham, Stivekey Hall. £2,820. Charles Blakeney.
1613. Paston House, Conisforth Street, Norwich. £800. Sir William Cope of Hardwick, Oxon.
1615. Donyatt (Somerset). £4,200. William, Earl of Pembroke.

1616. Castle Acre. £8,000. Thomas, Earl of Exeter.
1616. Longford (Derby). £5,000. Trustees of Mrs. Longford of Longford.
1618. Cokeley (Suffolk). £1,000. Christopher Hayward.

The sum expended on these properties was more than £80,000, and it may be safely asserted that his total expenditure on land considerably exceeded £100,000, equal to half a million in these later days, if Mr. Strachey's statement in "Elizabeth and Essex" be correct that an Elizabethan £1,800 was equivalent to £10,000 at the present moment.

APPENDIX III

A LETTER FROM A TENANT-FARMER

AMONG the domestic papers of Sir Edward Coke at Holkham, several letters have interest as throwing a curious light on the rural life of Norfolk in Elizabethan days. A strange, uncomfortable life for some of the tenant-farmers, owing to the quarrelsome lawlessness of ill-conditioned squires. Sixteenth-century letters from important people are common enough, but I am told that letters from tenant-farmers are very rare.

No. 1 is a letter to Edward Coke from Mr. Clements, one of his tenants, and also a tenant of the Crown, in the parish of Longham, a few miles from Godwick. Clements complains bitterly of ill-usage at the hands of Mr. Arthur Futter, Lord of the Manor, and chief landowner of Longham, and a tenant of some lands belonging to Mr. Coke. This is dated "Aprylle 1596," a few months before that cheerful visit to Godwick which has been described.

Mr. Futter was a person of good estate and consideration. Sir Edward paid him £2,800 for his manor and lands in 1610. The Manor House was remembered by old people alive in 1879 as a spacious old Tudor mansion which Mr. Thomas William Coke pulled down and replaced by a "neat farm-house of white brick." The savagery of this "Gentleman" is eloquent of the state of the Norfolk countryside in 1596. Mr. Clements' grammar and spelling are given unaltered, but as he never used either comma or full stop, this want has been supplied.

Letter No. 1.

Mr. Clements to Mr. Edward Coke, Attorney-General.

"Right worshipful and my very good master,

"I crave pardon of your worship to trouble you with some bad deiling of Arthur Futter your fermour, who is as bad a neybour as ever came to Longham, synce I did knowe the towne. The said Futter hath with great force entered upon me her Majesties fermour of Pryors in Longham, and wyll not suffer me to plowe or feede the same, but with divers persons he ploweth and carveth the land, and seyth that you have sett the ferme over to hym. I have receyved a warrant from her Majesties Receyver to paye my ferme the XVIII daye of this instant Aprylle, the said Futter taking the profytt. I know not what to do therein without your good counsell; his father is bound in Recognisance to her Majestie in one . . . . to suffer me, her highness' fermour, to occupye and enjoy quyetly the said Pryors, and nowe he put me out as heretofore he hathe done; I complayne for that, and had process for the levying thereof, which was executed upon his father's shepe, by the Sheryff of Norfolk; the said Arthur Futter hath made affidavit that the said shepe were one Robert Brown his brother in lawe, which indeed was not trewe, and so had the shepe redelyvered, and so he now proceedeth with greater force. Futter hath entered into his service a Badde Rogesth [roguish] fellowe whose name is John Woffett, who doth counterfett symplicitie, and wyll not speke nor here, but when he lyketh. This Woffett gyveth out that he wyll kyll and beate me and all my servants yf we come on hys master's grounde, and it was tolde me that Futter should say yf he should kyll anybodie that he should not be hanged for that he is an Ingun [*sic*] or madde. Thys Woffett and Futter go beweponed, wth their bushebilles and III or IV dogges and dryveth and chaseth and bateth my catell . . . neats grett with calfe, and other my cattell, as well as my swyne grett with pigge, both out of Pryors and myne owne grounde, by reason whereof some of them have shott their young to my grett loss and undoing: they pull and brek open my hedges and fences, so as my cattell cannot goo in quyet, but am forced to sett a keper for my cattell in myne own closes. Woffett hath dryven my cattell into Futter's yard and I have sent my sarvint to knowe where they were taken and what hurte they had done, and offered amandes at the judgment of my neybour; then Futter wyll not be seen, but hys wyfe seyth she knoweth not where Woffett take them and do delyver the cattell, seying yf her cattell do me trespasse, I shall do the lyke. About All Saints last, Futter or some other of his sarvints toke a good gelding, cost me £VIII, in the grounde he fermeth of you, the gates and fences being open, and kept him in his yerd XXV owers [hours]. I sending for the gelding, Futter would not be seen; his wyfe said £10 was too lytell for the trespass that my catell had don, and so Futter sent the gelding into Myttford Hundred where he is Balyef, and hym to a pound which he hath newly made to impounde my cattell, as he hath gyven out, and said, and sent me word, that I should have a replye of his uncle Skerlett; thither I sent, Skerlett was not at home, and so my gelding stode styll in the pound other XVIII owers; by reason of such a serfeyte my gelding is dede. Futter doth fell and sell wood and tidds he careth not to whom, or where it be copy or free, among which he hath a lusty champion called Stephen Combye, your fermour also, and he taketh Futter's part both lustyle and Badlye, and to hym Futter sold certen tidds standing upon the Copyhold called Dewes; I warned Combye afore your sarvints Constable and Heywood that he should not fell there, and showed them for the proffe thereof to be Copyhold, and desyred them to goo to Futter to shewe him his dedes for the same, and what answer Futter made Constable can report;

Combye cause the tidds to be felled; I forbadd Combye agayne, and he said he careth not, Futter would send hym harmless; I sente II of my sarvints to fetche a lode to see what Combye wold do, wylling them to kepe the pece, and to come away yf Combye wold resist, and as one of them were cuttyng some of the wood, Combye came with great hast, and one John Skerlett had a staffe, and Combye asked my men who bad hym do so and at that word stroke vemently at one of my sarvints called Wllm Albye, he fled and came away, Combye still laying on until hys staff broke, and then he toke Skerletts staffe, and so contynued betyn hym, and swarying wth horrible oathes that he wold kyll hym, and so Bete hym downe and wold have kylled hym, if my other sarvints had not stayed his hand; for after he was downe, he broke his other staffe also, seyeng he cared not yf it cost hym a hundred pounds; and so leaving hym lyeng upon the grounde dede for the tyme, presently cometh Futters wyfe and others wth her, and axed Combye yf he had kylled the grett calfe; and so he laye untyll his fellowes broute one of my geldings and wth moche a do gett lyfe in hym ageyne, and broute hym home; yet he dyeng styll away, we had moch a do to keepe hys lyfe, yett by Godd's good helpe, and greet dylygance, watchynge nyght and daye wth comfortable thyngs, after a month or more he did feade himself, and nowe goeth abrode, but work he cannot his arms and backe is so brused, and I fear he shall never be able to worke for his lyving, as he hath done. For your lands late Hylton your worship hath a bad fermour of Futter, for your houses and fences by report be XX nobles worse than they were when he entred them, for your survey Constable can Reporte what Futter seyth, but he gyveth warnyng that I come not upon his manor of Pryors or Watlyngten; and truly Futter destroyeth and fedeth my land and grasses with his cattell bothe . . . neate, horse, swyne, and shepe, and kepe a shepherd, and say he have libertie of fold-course, and when my sarvints take his cattell doing me trespasse to dryve them to the pounde, he and his sarvints will restore them, and put my sarvints in peryll of their lyves, for which doings he was judged with other of his people upon II severall Ryotts; and so by these doings with many other Injuryes as he seyth he hopeth to make me wery, and a poore man: the closes I have recovered against his father he enjoyeth, and wth grett force kepe me out, I styll trusting in God; I hope your worship wyll take such order betwene us and that I and he maye enjoy eyther of us our owne, so being shamed to trouble your worship with such wranglyng I wyll and do leave the same to the Almyghty who knoweth all sacretts, unto whose mercie and goodness I praye for your helth and prosperitie to hys good wyll and pleasure.

"Your good sarvint to command to his small power

"George Clements.

"Longham

"*this VIII of Apryll* 1596."

It is to be hoped that the Attorney-General went over from Godwick to Longham, and put the fear of God and the Law into Mr. Futter and his varlets.

LETTER NO. 2

Letter from Mr. Edward Coke to Mrs. Clements.

Five years have passed, Mr. Clements is dead, and both Mr. Coke and the widow are involved in lawsuits about their respective properties.

"*May* 6. 1601.
"FROM THE TEMPLE.

"MRS. CLEMENTS.

"I praye you if anybodie molest and trouble you, acquainte me and I will provide for your safetie and quiet, onlie I pray you let me know it, and you shall be in peace. . . . I heare say that one Trenche denie you a way to a meadowe. I pray you in my name desire him to yeld you your waye, and if he denie it, lett me understand and I will see you receyve no wrong at his hands."

Mrs. Clements is to send up documents "verie material for the proffe of your and my righte. You shall receive it again, for we must joine together in defence of our righte. . . ."

The Attorney-General writes to her with his own hand. He shows himself a careful and considerate landlord.

LETTER NO. 3

Mr. Constable, Bailiff, to his master, Mr. Edward Coke, Attorney-General.

In this Mrs. Clements appears in her true character—no friend, but a traitor to the interests of her landlord, conspiring with Mr. Futter to defraud him. Mr. Constable has to complain seriously of her misdeeds.

1. "Right worshipful, my humble dutie remembered. Your doubting of Mrs. Clements for felling of tymber trees, and topping of such that hath not heretofore ben topped; lykewyse for Futter, I had often wisht to view the grounds, for I perceyve she hath small care to presarve any of your woods as before they were. . . .

2. "Synce Clements death, in borders about the pastures wch Clements did fell, and presarve by fencing, being young, and strayt ashes and other woods, she has topped a number as it were man heyth [height] and some by the ground, and do not fence it. I never see such wood so topped in my lyfe.

3. "Also being at Longham the first of June last, I found two men topping of the okes that hath never been topped afore, and felling of the grett ould thornes by the ground, on east side of Conger way in the

nether furlonge where Cringle Pitt is, and abutting upon the common lynge. There is topped some XIII okes, havinge very great toppes, and all the thornes, I demand who set them to fell; they said Mr. Gates, Mrs. Clement's kynsman, by whom she is directed, I take it.

4. "I went to Mrs. Clements and asked her. 'Who felled these trees?' She answered that Futter had sould them to her cousin Gates. I tould her that Futter, yn her husband's lyfetime, never did challenge any of these trees, and neyther would he suffer hym to deale with any, and 'will you suffer my masters woods to be felled?' She answered me she thought they should break off, for Futter would have bond for his money before we did se his evidence, where in she betrayed herself to be a party. I said to her she is so . . . that for a small gayne she would spoyle the fould-course and hinder herself and yr worship also.

5. "I had conference with Futter, asked what he ment to toppe the okes and fell the thornes. He answered that he might fell his own, and that he did fell more, now Mrs. Clements had joyned wth him. I tould hym that it was very bould done of hym to deale with those trees nowe, consideringe that he never durst meddle with them before, and that he should be answered as well as before, and wyshed hym to stay felling any more until I hadd informed your worshipp thereof. so he promised to fell no more as yett.

6. "Also Futter and Mrs. Clements hath sould to Mr. Gates all the okes to be topped, and all the Thornes to be felled by the ground, yf I hadd not prevented them, and denyed the felleres or any other to fell or carry, saying that if Mr. Gates, Futter, or Mrs. Clements, or any other of them did come there to fell any I would not suffer it; for yt was fully intended amongst them to fell all from Cunningher way west unto Launditch to the utter defacing of the fould-course. . . . Thus with my humble dutie I commit your worshipp to the blessed protection of the Almyghty.

"Your servant humbly to command,
"RICHARD CONSTABLE.

"TITELESHALL
"*the XIth of June* 1601.

"Sir, yf it be your pleasure to lett Lunham woods, I take it I can get a fermor, there will be noe woods felled this III or VI yeares, so it were better to be letten, then kept. Also Syon mill, the myller hath ben offered according to the . . . and made refusall, so I have fully concluded wth mayde for it.

"To the Ryght wor. his singular good Mr. Edwarde Coke, Esq. her Maties Attorney Generall, at London, gyve these wth speede."

Docketed by Sir Edward, "Constable concerning Mrs. Clements."

APPENDIX IV

THE LIBRARY OF THE CHIEF JUSTICE

SIR EDWARD COKE caused a catalogue of his library to be drawn up, apparently in 1630. It is not quite complete, for there still remain books with his name on the flyleaf which are not mentioned in the catalogue. This is written on eighteen pieces of vellum which form a roll 42 feet long. He must have had more than 1,200 manuscripts and printed books.

Of manuscripts there are enumerated: Divinity, 15; Popish, 7; "and manie Breviaries, Lady's Psalters and Manuells"; Law, 77: Historical and State, 28; "Herauldry," 15. Of these about sixty can still be identified as in the possession of Sir Edward's descendants.

The printed books are divided into various categories. First come Divinity and Popish books, which number about 260; then we read:

> "Secondly, of the books of the lawes of England (because they are derived from the lawes of God) whereof some be manuscript and some mixt, ptlie in printe and ptlie written, others in print, and of these in order, and first of Manuscripts."

The printed law-books come to about 120, and the list is followed by—

> "And forasmuch as approved histories are necessary for a jurisconsult for he that hath read them seemed to have lived in those former ages, histories shall follow in the next place."

Histories number about 200, in Greek, Latin, English, French, and Italian.

Then follows:

> "And seeing Philosophy, Rethoricke, Grammar, Lodgic and Schoole bookes are handmaides to the knowledge of lawes, they shall follow in the next place."

There are sixty of these.

This list is succeeded by—

> "And for that Dictionaries are aides and helpes to all that went before, and that follow after, they shall come in the next place."

Thirty-three dictionaries are given, and so we come to—

> "And forasmuch as there is no knowledge of any worthie science but maye stand a jurisconsult in stead at one tyme or another, we have added these books ensuinge of severall sciences, viz.
>
> Books de Republica (5)
> Concerning Herauldry and Armies (9)
> Cosmography (31)
> Mathematiques (13)
> Books of Trade (14)
> Books of Warre and the like (12)
> Agriculture and Architecture (6)."

Next:

> "And forasmuch as . . . 'morbi neglecta curatio corpus interfecit,' in the next place shall follow Books of Phisick and Naturall Philosophic."

Thirty-three books in this class.

Now comes a lighter side of literature:

> "And seeing that et prodesse solent et delectare poete, in the next place shall followe books of poetrie."

There are sixty books of poetry and six Italian comedies.

The catalogue goes on with—

> "Tracts and Discourses, diversi argumenti in Lattine, English, French, etc."

This miscellaneous collection amounts to about sixty-five volumes and the catalogue ends with a list of some 150 "Italian Discoures and other books."

Not all of the printed books were originally of Sir Edward Coke's choosing. With his second wife he came into possession of the library of her husband's uncle, the famous Lord Chauncellor Hatton, and about a hundred of these, chiefly Italian, are now at Holkham. Sir Christopher has written his name in such of the books as are not either bound with

"C. H." or his coat of arms on the cover. In some instances Sir Edward Coke has added his name.

Besides the "Knightley" Psalter (see p. 2), it is probable that some other beautiful English Service Books were the Chief Justice's. Various copies of "Magna Carta cum statutis," plentifully "quoted in the margent" (his own expression for his annotations), are interesting. Among the rest, the most remarkable are a richly illuminated "Secreta Secretorum" executed for K. Edward III. before he succeeded to the throne; Upton's "De Officio Militari," of which Sir Edward has written: "The book composed by Upton, and fairly written, being, as I take it, the very original" (this had been given by Upton to Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester); a thirteenth-century copy of Monk Symeon's History of the Church of Durham; and a translation, of the same date, of the Saxon Laws. This had belonged to Archbishop Parker, and was given to Sir Edward, with other books, by his son John Parker. It has some curious memoranda, at the close of which is written: "Hæc tabula sic collecta fuit Cantabrigie per Matthæum Parker cum erat juvenis et scripta fuit manu sua propria." There are also several manuscripts with dedications to Sir Edward, of which the most important is one of Sir John Davies' famous poem "Nosce Teipsum."

It would appear from the catalogue that, as Dr. Johnson suspected, the Chief Justice was not a man of letters, though he could enumerate sixty books of poetry. Their number is surprising, if Thomas Fuller was justified in saying of him that "Among the people he used to foredoom to misery and poverty were rhyming poets." Chaucer, Spenser, and Samuel Daniel in some degree compensate for the absence of the name of Shakespeare, but translations from the classics form the majority, and there are several little volumes of congratulatory verse to Queen Elizabeth, Burleigh, King James, and Queen Anne. That Sir Edward owned "Poet Dante's Works" and two Petrarchs is to his credit. It is much to be lamented that "A book of English verses, *inter alia* of Garland's" has disappeared. This might have contained something unique.

It is satisfactory, however, that his posterity has preserved his copy, with his name in it, of Tyndale's Pentateuch, 1530; the magnificent copy of Parker's "De Antiquitate Ecclesiæ," which was the archbishop's own; and the copy of the "Novum Organon," which was a present from Bacon; and, shall I add, his perfect copy of "Laws Divine & Moral . . . for the Colony in Virginia Britannia."

Some of his earlier books are bound with nothing more than "E. C." on the covers; then he puts his crest—the ostrich with the horseshoe; finally, his coat of arms adorns the covers, and the catalogue occasionally notes that a book is "fairely bound and gilt both cover and leaves."

He made an heirloom of his library, and wrote that if any heir-male should alienate it or any of his possessions, "then I pronounce such person . . . ungrate and unthankful to such an affectionate, loving and provident ancestor."

(Some other details about the Chief Justice's books, also of the magnificent collection of manuscripts made by Thomas Coke, first Earl of Leicester, are given in a paper read by the author before the Bibliographical Society on March 1, 1922, and published in *The Library,* Fourth Series, vol. ii., No. 4.)

APPENDIX V

CHIEF JUSTICE COKE'S PLATE, PICTURES, "RARITIES," AND "HOUSEHOLD STUFF"

THE list drawn up of "Plate putt into the yron cheste at the Temple this 2^nd^ of August, 1631," shows that Sir Edward Coke owned sufficient plate to have filled a silversmith's shop. A brief selection of some of the more important pieces may be interesting. Most, if not all of them, had vanished by 1707 (when the list of Edward and Cary Coke's plate was drawn up). Whether sold to pay debts by Sir Robert or by John Coke, or melted down for the King by the former, or merely "muddled away," we cannot now decide.

Item. Two great gilte spoute potts, the one weighing 111 oz. ½ and the other 110 oz.

Item. One great Bason double gilte with Lovell's Armes on it, weighing 89½ oz.

Item. One Ewer to the same, weighing 38 oz.

Item. One plaine gilte Salt with a Cover, weighing 53 oz.

Item. One Cuppe and Cover gilte and chased with Coke and Paston's armes, 59 oz.

Item. 6 Gilte Candlesticks.

Item. One Greate Nutt Cup with Cover gilte in a case with Coke's and Paston's armes, 76 oz.

Item. One verie faire gilte salt in a Case with Coke's armes and five Esquires in silver, 75 oz.

Item. 12 verie faire gilte spoons, 36½ oz.

Item. 1 very faire Bason gilte with embost worke, sometime with London Armes, but now with Coke's Arms with the 8 several Coates that he quarters, 101½ oz.

Item. One faire Ewer to the same, 65 oz. 4^{d}.

Item. One faire plaine gilt Voyder with London Armes, 131¼ oz.

Item. Two faire stoop potts sutable to the Bason and Ewer, with London Armes, 163 oz.

Item. One gilte Bason wrought with dolphins and scallop shells with Coke and Paston's Armes, 83 oz.

Item. One Ewer sutable, 42 oz.

Item. One paire stoope potts sutable, weighing 97¾ oz.

Item. One silver Bason in the forme of a scallop shell with the Armes of Denmark, 59¾ oz.

Item. One Ewer to the same in forme of a Mermayde with the like armes graven on the Breast, 39¾ oz.

Item. Porringer with Armes of Denmark, 16⅛ oz.
Item. 10 Candlesticks gilte, and 3 parcell gilte.
Item. Two Lowe Lath Silver Candlesticks, 18¾ oz.
Of Chafing dishes, 10 silver dishes of several sizes, largest 48¼ oz., smallest 9½ oz.
One possett pott with a cover and a Saucer on the toppe, 23 oz.

Then comes an almost equally long list of " Plate at Godwick in the custodie of Henrie Becke," of which may be mentioned:

1 gilt Bason in a Box, 87 oz., and Ewer sutable, 35¾ oz.
1 other Bason fairely embossed with frutages, 74 oz., Ewer 32 oz.
1 Great Bason with Paston's Armes, 59 oz.
1 Paire of flaggon potts guilt and embossed with dolphins each way, 96½ oz.
2 Livery Potts, 33¼ and 32½ oz.
One verie faire standinge cuppe and Cover double guilt wrought with gilliflowers with a Man and a pollox in his hands on the toppe, 49 oz.
Another, with gilliflowers and Cupids on the toppe of the cover, 33 oz.
Several " deepe French bowles " with and without covers.
Several " Esse " bowles.
12 guilt trencher plates.
1 stone cuppe guilt called the Serpentine Cuppe, 47 oz.
1 Cristall cuppe with a cover guilt, 44 oz.

The silver dishes and plates are so numerous that Sir Edward could have entertained a very large company to several " courses," without need of intermediate " washing up."

I do not identify in Sir Edw. Coke's inventory a piece of plate given to him by Lord Rutland. In an account book of the Earl of Rutland (Hist. MSS. Comm., MSS. of the Duke of Rutland, vol. iv.) among "Paiements for gyftes and rewardes, 1613-14," is this entry: " Paid for a gilt bole and cover weight 42 ounces at 7s. the ounce—given to Sir Edward Cooke, Lord Chief Justice, 14l. 12. 6d." It may be remembered that Bridget Paston was related to the Manners family.

Should any reader of these lists be able to identify any of Sir Edward's pieces of plate as still in existence, it would be kind to notify their present habitat to Lord Leicester, or to the Author of this book.

If the list of plate be long, that of pictures is short enough. Twelve pictures (at Hatton House) are mentioned: " The Duke of Suffolk and his Ladie (a souvenir, perhaps, of Huntingfield

Hall, which had been theirs), the Lord Treasurer Burghley, Jeanne Goodman, Bishopp Whitgift, Mr. Knightley, Mr. Camden, Chiefe Baron Sanders, Mr. Arundell, Sir Thomas Gargrave, Cardinall Wolsey, of Christ's Resurrection, and another picture." And "at Stoke, in the Gallery above, are the pictures of S^{r} Thomas Moore, Bishopp Fox and Bishopp Fisher."

Of these the only picture of certain identification now at Holkham is that of Sir Thos. More.

"RARITIES"

Among the "Rarities" are some jewels.

These are few but fit, evidently very precious to the Chief Justice.

A ringe sett with a great Turkys which K. Henry 8 used to wear and was pictured with it on his forefinger.

A ringe sett with a great diamond cutt with fawcetts. Given to Sr. Edw. Coke by Q. Anne for the discovering of the poysoning of Sr. Thomas Overbury, etc.

A ringe sett with a redd stone having Queene Elizabeth's picture artificially graven in it.

A sapphire cutt with fawcetts like a cressent, sett in gould and little diamonds.

The collar of S.S. signifying Science and Sapience together with the white and redd rose for Lancaster and Yorke.

One silver bell, guilt, with Coke's arms thereon, weighing 6 oz. 10 d.

What has become of these historic jewels? And what is to be thought of those of the Chief Justice's heirs-male who sold them, or lost them, or allowed them to stray? Whatever fine qualities he may have transmitted to his posterity, no descendant seems to have inherited his sense of the charm of antiquity, and the value of historic relics, nor have all of them taken thought for their posterity, as he did.

As to the S.S. Collar, I believe that the Collar worn by Sir Edward as Chief Justice of the Common Pleas descended with each holder of that office until it was abolished, when the last Chief Justice, Lord Coleridge, was allowed to keep the Collar. This was offered for sale in London, in 1924, but withdrawn at £1,000. The Collar worn by Sir Edward, which was his own property, has long since disappeared. Isaac

D'Israeli, in his "Curiosities of Literature," says that Lord Egerton wished to buy it, but Sir Edward Coke answered that he would not part with it, but would leave it to his posterity that they might know they had a Chief Justice among their ancestors.

A lengthy correspondence about the significance of the letters S S in the Collar was conducted in *The Times* newspaper in 1924. The antiquaries of to-day do not take Sir Edward Coke's view that they stood for Sapience and Science.

The rings were in a trunk, with divers papers of value, which was seized by Sir Francis Windebank,[1] acting by order of the Privy Council, when Sir Edward lay dying. The trunk was taken to His Majesty, King Charles I., at Bagshot, "by his Majestie's commandment, and then broken up." A list of its contents exists in a volume belonging to Archbishop Laud, which is now at Lambeth. The three principal rings are clearly indicated in it.

Some of the papers, at a later period, were restored to Sir Robert Coke, but the rings vanish from history. Did some of the King's attendants "loot" them? It seems likely. The Earl of Cromer possesses a ring set with a great turquoise which bears a strong likeness to the ring on Henry VIII.'s forefinger, and on the finger of the Chief Justice, as seen in their portraits. This ring was given to one of his ancestors of the Errington family in memory of King Charles. It has been made to open, and when the turquoise is lifted up a picture of Charles is disclosed. Is it possible that this was once Henry VIII.'s ring? I should like to think that it is.

The diamond ring "cutt with fawcetts," given by Queen Anne, appears, as I believe, in a portrait of the Chief Justice, which belongs to the Benchers of the Inner Temple.

Mr. Inderwick (Catalogue of the Paintings, etc., belonging to the Inner Temple [1915], p. 22) thought it probable that the ring, suspended by a chain round Sir Edward's neck in this portrait, was given him by Queen Elizabeth.

But the Catalogue of Rarities would surely have made a note of any ring presented by the great Queen, and, besides, a close inspection of the ring in the portrait shows that it resembles the ring known to have been given by Queen Anne.

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[1] See page 46.

After the lists of plate come shorter lists of "Coynes and Antiquities," from which the following may be selected, for collections of coins were not common in the sixteenth century:

Three Roman Coynes in Gold, besides a number of others in Silver and Brasse in a Box made for the purpose.
A great peece of Gould having the picture of a King and a Queene, and under it, 1120, of the value of £20.
A forreine Spur-royall.
Faire coynes of Ferdinand and Elizabeth King and Queene of Spaine, of Philipp King of Portugal, of Charles Duke of Savoye, the Duke of Mantua, etc.
A peece of Coyne of Pope Leo, having on the reverse the 3 Wise Men that came from the East artificially exprest.

Of English coins to be noted are:

3 Saxon coynes, hollowe, and havinge in the hollowe a horse inartificially pourtrayed.
3 Spur-royalls.
8 gold Angels of severall tymes.
A great picture in Gould of Kinge Henrye the 8th with inscription of hebrewe and Greek characters on the reverse, concerning his supremacie which he sent abroad to his friends and allies.
3 double sovereigns of King Henry 8.
4 " " " King Edw. 6, and one single.
2 " " " Q. Mary, Q. Elizabeth and King James, and 3 singles.
1 single Sovereign of Scotland with the Cross daggers.
2 George Nobles.

"HOUSEHOLD STUFF"

Lists of "Household Stuff" in the sixteenth century are by no means uncommon, and there are still some fortunate families who have piously preserved many of their ancestors' goods. But certain of Sir Edward Coke's furnishings deserve a record. Evidently he superintended the making of his inventories, and was careful to distinguish between his own properties and those that had come with his second wife.

Besides the great cupboards of plate at Godwick Hall, there was some rich furniture there. The inventory begins:

"Concerninge myne hangings, bedsteads, and specially an ancient Tester of a Bedd embroidered in Gould with eagles. Lynnen, brasse, pewter and other household stuff . . . at Godwicke, they are in the safe charge and custody of Henry Becke, gent. for the keepinge of which house at Godwicke and of all the plate, etc. he hath a yearly fee and reward allowed unto him by me Sir Edward Coke . . . for all which he must answer, and if any be missing, imbezeled, purloyned, or for want of good keepinge decayed, wasted or destroyed, he must make recompense. And of all the plate etc., there are inventories in the yron chest at Godwicke whereof Henry Becke has coppies, the better to look to the same, and to be charged therewith."

There was a small quantity of plate at the Temple not noted in the inventory, but the best of the "stuff" and the plate were either at Stoke or at Hatton House in London.

Household Stuffe at Stoke of S^r^ Edw: Coke w^ch^ never were S^r^ Xtofer Hatton's lo: Chauncellor of England:[1]

A Sute of Tapistrie hangings of Kinge Pharao and the children of Israell cont. nyne peeces, whereof eight are in the Greate Chamber, and one peece at the upper end of the hall.

One Arminge chaire, 12 backe chaires, 12 highe stooles and two lowe stooles, all covered with leather in the Great Chamber.

One little longe Persian Carpett in the Great Chamber.

A Canopie, backe peece, and valens with a deepe silver fringe, one Arminge chaire, one broad lowe stoole, and six longe cushions all of branched Cloth of Silver wrought with Tawney, in the Great withdrawing Chamber.

More in the withdrawing Chamber one longe cushion of watched velvett imbrodred with gould and pearles with the Earle of Cumberland's armes thereon.

More in the withdrawinge Chamber one longe Cushion of needlework wrought with gould and silke, with the letters E. C. on the border.

In the best bedchamber, one guilt bedstead with the Tester headpeece and double valens of white Sattine imbrodred, and the topp of Stript Cloth of silver, with five Curtaines of Clouded Taffitta, fringed with gould and silke.

More in the best bedchamber, one steele looking glasse, in a Case inlayed with mother of pearle.

In the two bedchambers over the hall, five peeces tapistrie hanging with Aston's armes, and four window peeces.

In the parlor, one Carpett of redd cloth about 4 yards longe.

In the bedchamber within the parlor, one faire great looking glasse sett in ebony.

In the hall, eight faire pictures whereof foure are of the 4 elem^ts^ and foure of the 4 seasons of the yeare.

In the Gallery are the pictures of S^r^ Thomas Moore, Bishopp Fox and Bishopp Fisher.

---

[1] Stoke and Hatton House, containing furniture which had come from the Hattons, Sir Edward is careful to distinguish between what was his own, and what was his wife's.

One slope Bedstead the posts covered with scarlett and laced with gould with the tester, hedpeece, valens, two carpetts, three feete valens all of scarlett garded with crimson velvett and laced and fringed with gould. Four other peeces of scarlett for windowe clothes.

* * * * *

Household Stuffe at Hatton house w^{ch} never were S^{r} Xtofer Hatton's Lo. Chauncellor of England:

Eight peeces of large and faire Tapestry hangings of the labours of Hercules, which sometime hanged in the Great Chamber at Stoke.
The first peece cont. in breadth 6 yards.
The second „ „ „ 5 yards ¼.
The third „ „ „ 4 yards ¾.
The fourth „ „ „ 3 yards ¾.
The fifth „ „ „ 3 yards.
One field bedstead of wallnuttree covered with stammell, with the tester hedpeece valens and five curteynes sutable, all laced with white and greene silke lace.
Five cupps of wood, painted sutable.
Three curteynes redd. One Matt.
One downe bedd and boulster. One small bedd.
One paire of pillows. One paire of fustian blanketts, one crimson Rugge, one Arminge Chaire sutable to the bedd.
One Sweete bagge of Taffita imbrodred with gould.
One stoole covered with crimson velvett.
One square table and a Turkey carpett to it with a white ground.
Six tapestry cushions with my lord's Armes.
A Great Yron chestt. Twelve pictures (see above).
A halberd in a case. One little white Cabinett of ivory.
A Mappe of the world. A Mappe of the Colledges of Cambridge.
One other Mappe. One lookinge glasse.
A Table of my lord's armes, and such as he quarters.

APPENDIX VI

SELECTION FROM SIR EDWARD COKE'S PRECEPTS FOR THE USE OF HIS CHILDREN AND THEIR POSTERITY

1. I desire y^t you may have wisdom, good understanding, goodwill, and praise among men: then, in all y^r actions fear God . . .

> Solo scitus servire Deo, sunt cœtera fraudes,
> Christum si bene scis, satis est si cœtera nescis.

4. Beware of 3 sins which never go unpunished either in ye party or his posterity, viz. Bribery, Simony, and Usury.
8. A Long Speech is ever displeasing, for ye matter lyeth in a narrow room.
10. When you give, give but little, but give often where you are to give.
12. If other men cross you, cross not yourself, prudens qui patiens, durissima fertque coquitque.
14. If you will keep your Estate and provide for your children, spend at most but 2 thirds of your revenue, and lay up yearly a 3^d part for provisions and preferment for yr. children.
15. A good and virtuous education of your children is part of your duty, and a sound patrimony.
16. Keep yourself within your circle and out of debt, for old Divines said that Debt went before Deadly Sin. . . .
17. Beware of excess in eating and drinking and use a Diet under your appetite. Diet is above physick, for many men are cur'd by Diet without physick, but no men by physick without Diet.
20. If you have any suit in Law, let your councell be well instructed, for better it is to have a mean councellor well-instructed, than yr. most excellent not perfectly informed.
22. Keep your evidences concerning your Land and inheritance safely from fire, etc. for they be surety for your land: And secretly from any but whom necessitye requireth, for many a man enjoyeth his lands and inheritance quietly by secresy only.
23. Amongst all your Allys and friends your own wisdom and discretion is your surest friend.
24. Hold all Innovations and new ways suspicious.
26. He is wise and fortunate that followeth his own business.
30. "Put not your finger in the mortar, nor steal a penny in the water," that is give not yourselves to costly building, nor to the Inning of surrounded grounds. . . .
31. Three costlinesses have decay'd many a worthy and fair descended family, viz. costly building, costly Diet and costly apparel.
33. The best assurance you can have is to buy lands of an honest man.

35. Name none of your children by a sirname or other new-devis'd name: ancient Christian names are known . . . seldom have I observed new-named men fortunate.

36. Never worke a woman more woe than she will worke herself if she hath her own will, good women will be directed by their good friends.

APPENDIX VII

THE WEDDING OF SIR ROBERT COKE AND THEOPHILA BERKELEY

THE excellent Mr. John Smyth (1567-1640), steward of the Berkeley Hundred, in his "Lives of the Berkeleys" gives a very interesting account of the Lady Theophila Berkeley's wedding. Mr. Smyth shared the admiration felt for her character by Mrs. Sadleir and the author of the "Elegy." He does not mention that she was brought up with the Queen of Bohemia, but tells us that she had the honour to be one of her bridesmaids. The marriage was celebrated in Berkeley Church on August 12, 1613, when—

> "How contenting on Lord Berkeley's part this marriage of his grandchild was, by this may be collected, That when Henry Briggs his chaplin demaunded . . . who giveth this woman to bee maryed to this man, Hee coming out of his seat in the Church (where he sate with Sr Edward Coke), taking her by the hand, That doe I, quoth hee, with all my heart: By which Sweet addition of the words (with all my heart) hee not only declared the Contentment of his own, but drew tears of joy from the eies of the Bridegroome's Father, to both which mine eares and eyes were witnesses.
>
> "And the Lord Coke the same day after dinner retiring into his chamber, forthwith brought forth these latin verses by him then made, alludeing to the maryage and the day, being St Clare's day:
>
> "'Clara dies Claræ, virgo quâ clara marita est
> Clara prius virgo, clarior uxor erit.'
>
> "And alludeing to the planets of that day:
>
> "'Ecce hodie coeunt caelestia sidera, phœbi
> Pulchri cum pulchra virgine ludit amor.'
>
> "And againe alludeing to their names:
>
> "'Clara dies Claræ, conjunxit pignora chara,
> Clarum Theophila et nomen et omen habet,
> Et prolem numerosam (clare Roberte) precatur,
> Sanguis uturque (sic) tibi, et magna caterva virum.'
>
> "A day still honored with a festivall memoriall wherever the Bride and Bridegroome hap to bee: A wedlock blessed with such mutuall Sympathy and Sweetnes that they seem to live one in the other.

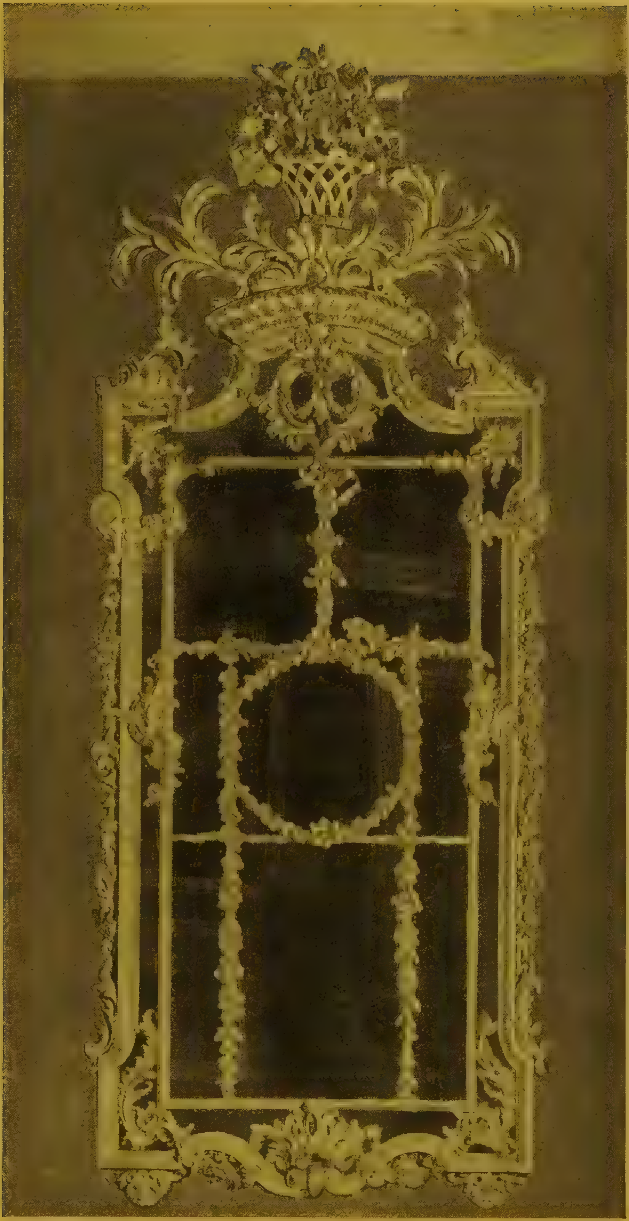
Other the like songs of joy and Contentment proceeded from that learned physitian Doctor Edward Lapworth and other schollers then present; which if I had preserved as well as the Catalogue of the 24 names of gentlemen of honor and armes then present, and delivered by mee upon the request of the said Cheife Justice, they had herein also appeared."

The Latin verses with their Saints and Planets might well have been the last that Sir Edward should write, for a week after he narrowly escaped a sudden death. Mr. Smyth continues:

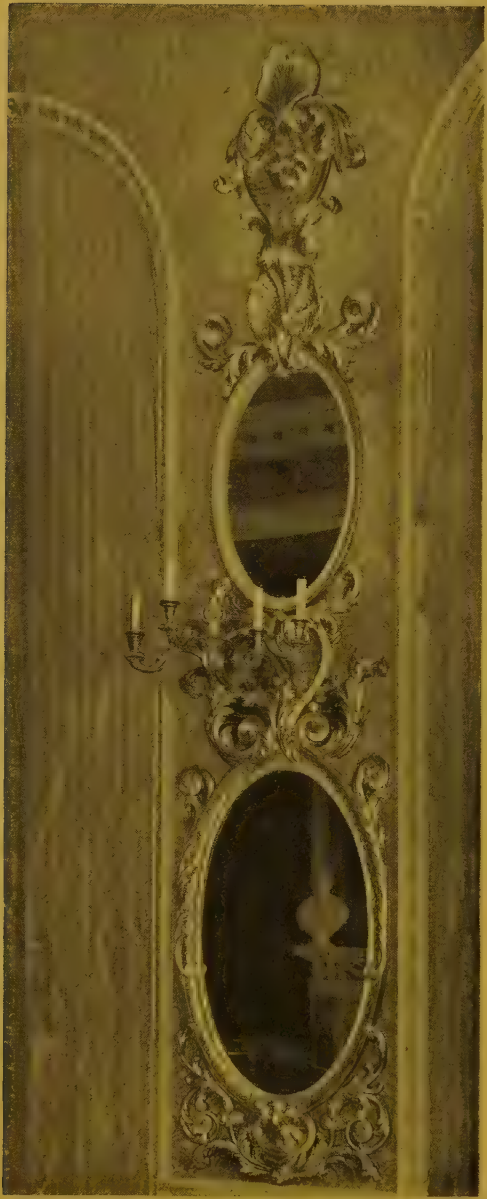
> "Neither Seemeth it a digression to remember that as this lord (Berkeley) brought his noble guests on their way to Cirencester a week after the mariage, hee and the lord Coke riding in one coach togeather, the same was, by the violent course and fury of the fower coach horses overthrown and dragged a good distance on the ground: out of which they were taken, and consideration had of the great danger their lives had escaped without hurt, it moved one of them (Lord Coke) presently to say, and the 24th of the same month, to write from Stoke with comfort, that hee never heard that out of soe great danger there issued so little harme, especially to persons so farre stepped in years."

Henry, Lord Berkeley was indeed "farre stepped in years," for he died the same year, November 26th, "being the day that he accomplished the age of Fowerscore years."

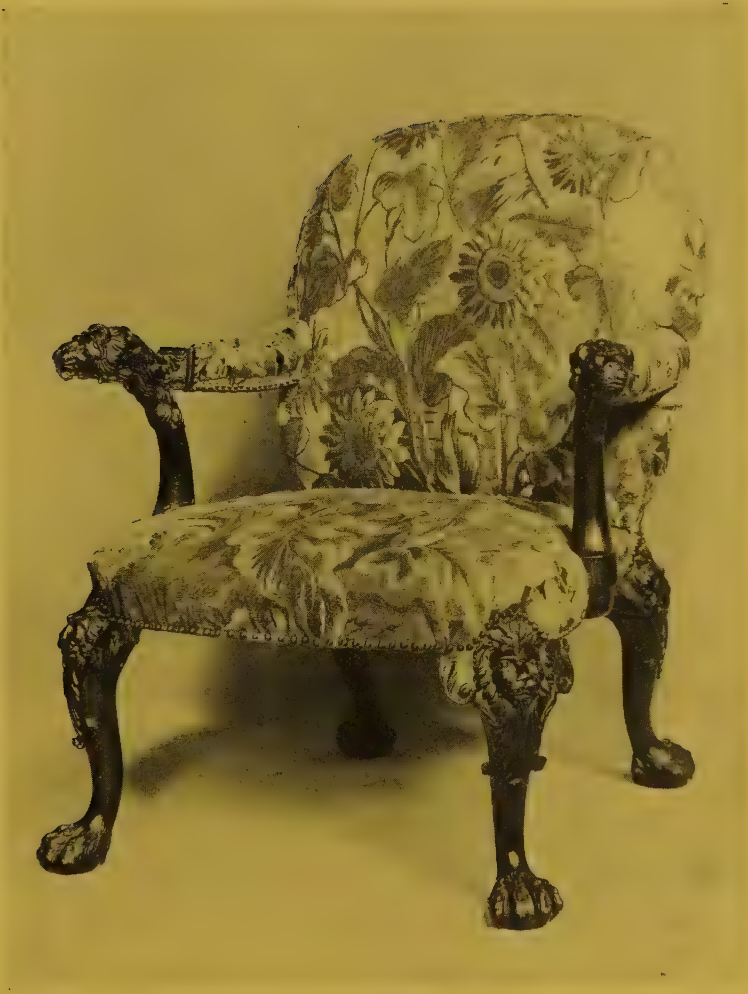
Mr. Smyth enlightens us as to the home of Sir Robert Coke and his lady in their earlier married life (see page 82). They remained some years at Callowden near Coventry, a house frequently inhabited by Theophila's grandfather (the same Henry, Lord Berkeley). It was here that his first wife Lady Katharine Howard, sister of Thomas, Duke of Norfolk (beheaded by Queen Elizabeth), had died in 1596.



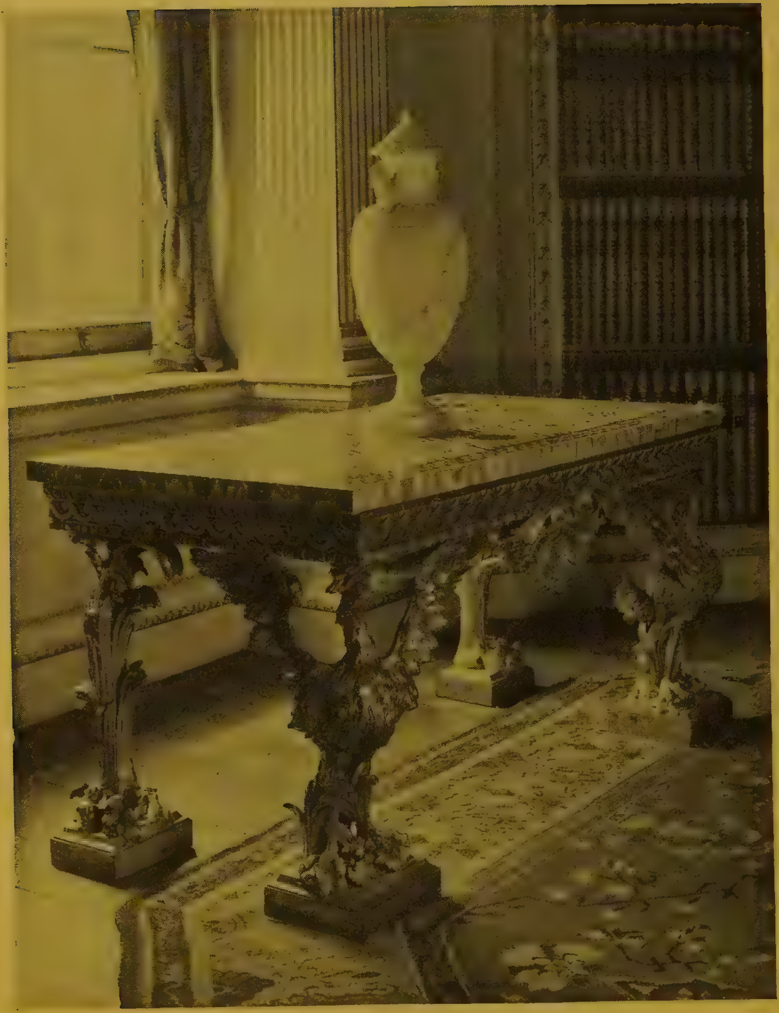
A DRAWING-ROOM LOOKING-GLASS, ATTRIBUTED BY MATT. BRETTINGHAM, JR., TO MR. WHITTLE.



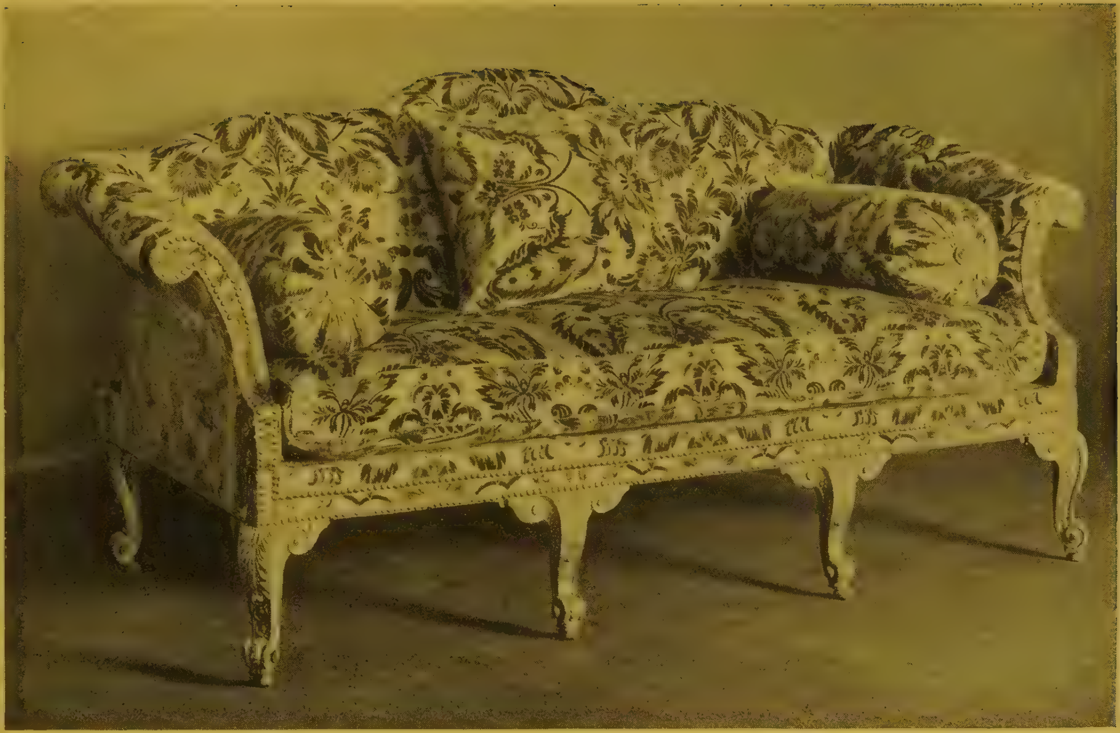
HOLKHAM—ONE OF THE SET OF LOOKING-GLASSES WITH CANDELABRA IN THE SALOON, PROBABLY BY MR. PUGH.



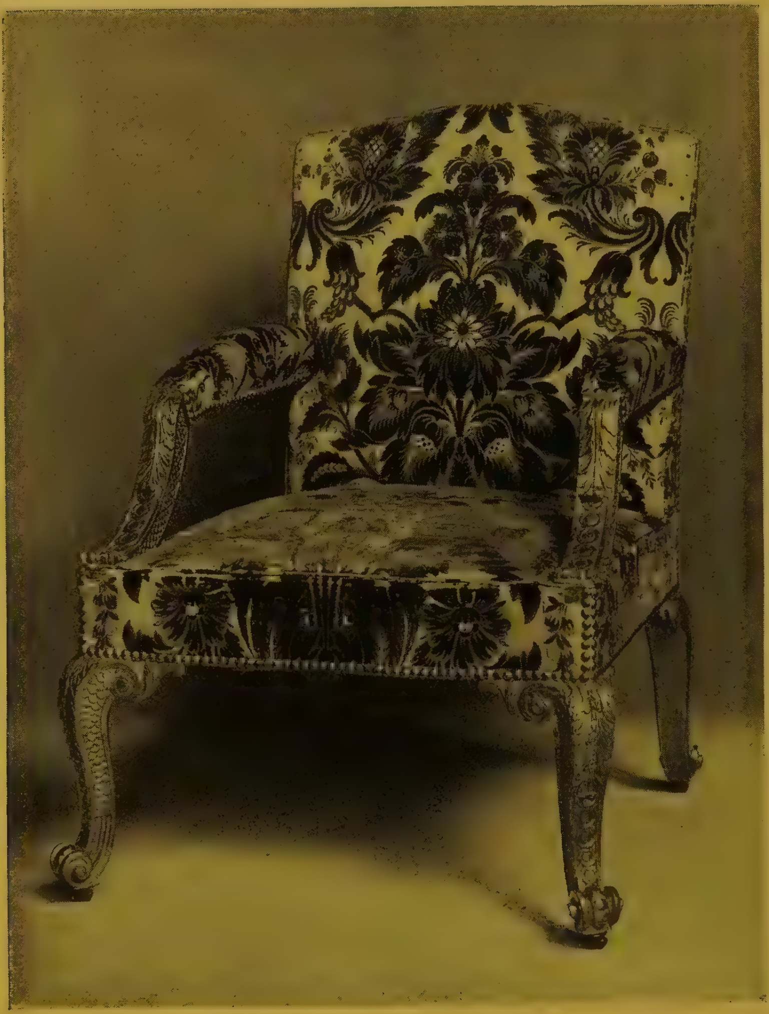
LION MASK CHAIR IN LONG LIBRARY, HOLKHAM.



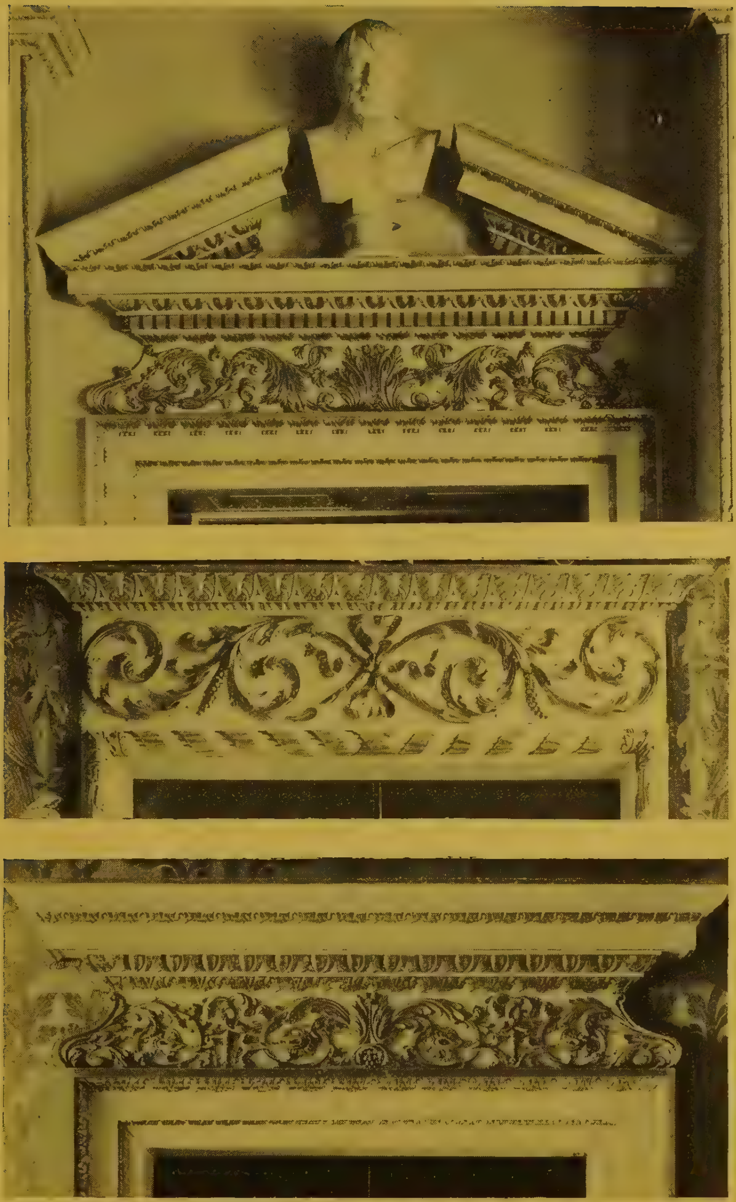
ONE OF A PAIR OF TABLES, GALLERY TRIBUNES,
HOLKHAM.



SETTEE IN GREEN STATE BEDROOM, HOLKHAM, DESIGNED BY KENT, CARVED BY MR. JAMES MILLER, THE GENOA VELVET SUPPLIED BY MESSRS. GOODISON.

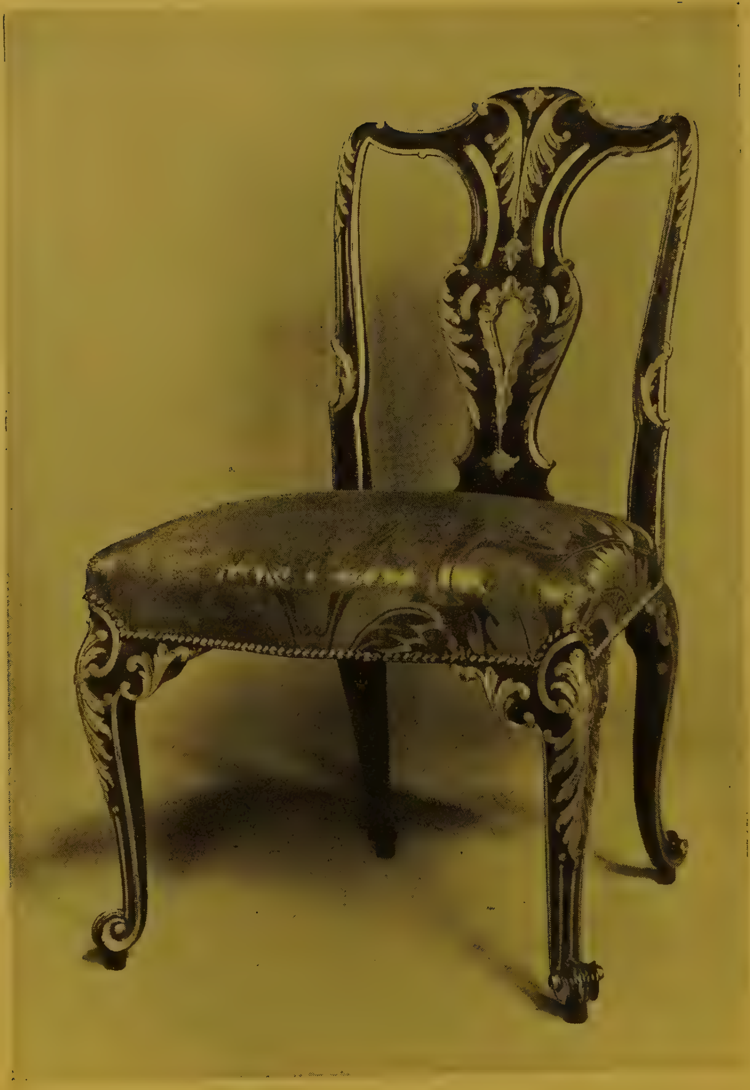


ARMCHAIR IN GREEN STATE BEDROOM, HOLKHAM, DESIGNED BY KENT, CARVED BY MR. JAMES MILLER, THE GENOA VELVET SUPPLIED BY MESSRS. GOODISON.



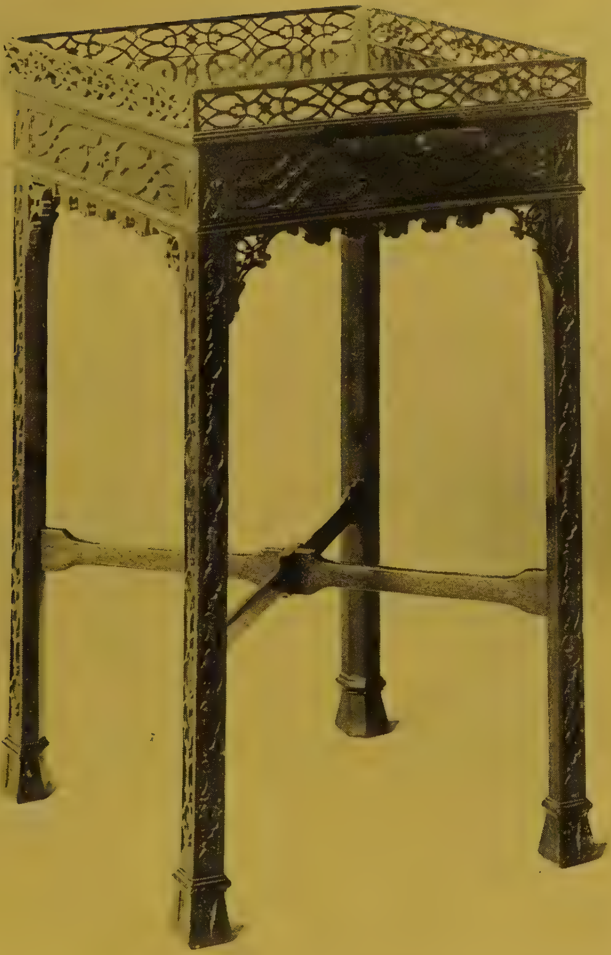
HOLKHAM—OVERDOOR IN MS. LIBRARY. OVERDOOR IN GREEN STATE BEDROOM. OVERDOOR IN LADY LEICESTER'S SITTING-ROOM.

Mr. Marsden's "rich friezes at 40s." above and below, the centre by Mr. Miller.



HOLKHAM—MAHOGANY AND GILT CHAIR.

The gilding by Mr. Walters, the chair probably by Mr. Jones.



SMALL FRETWORK URN TABLE IN SOUTH DINING-ROOM, HOLKHAM.

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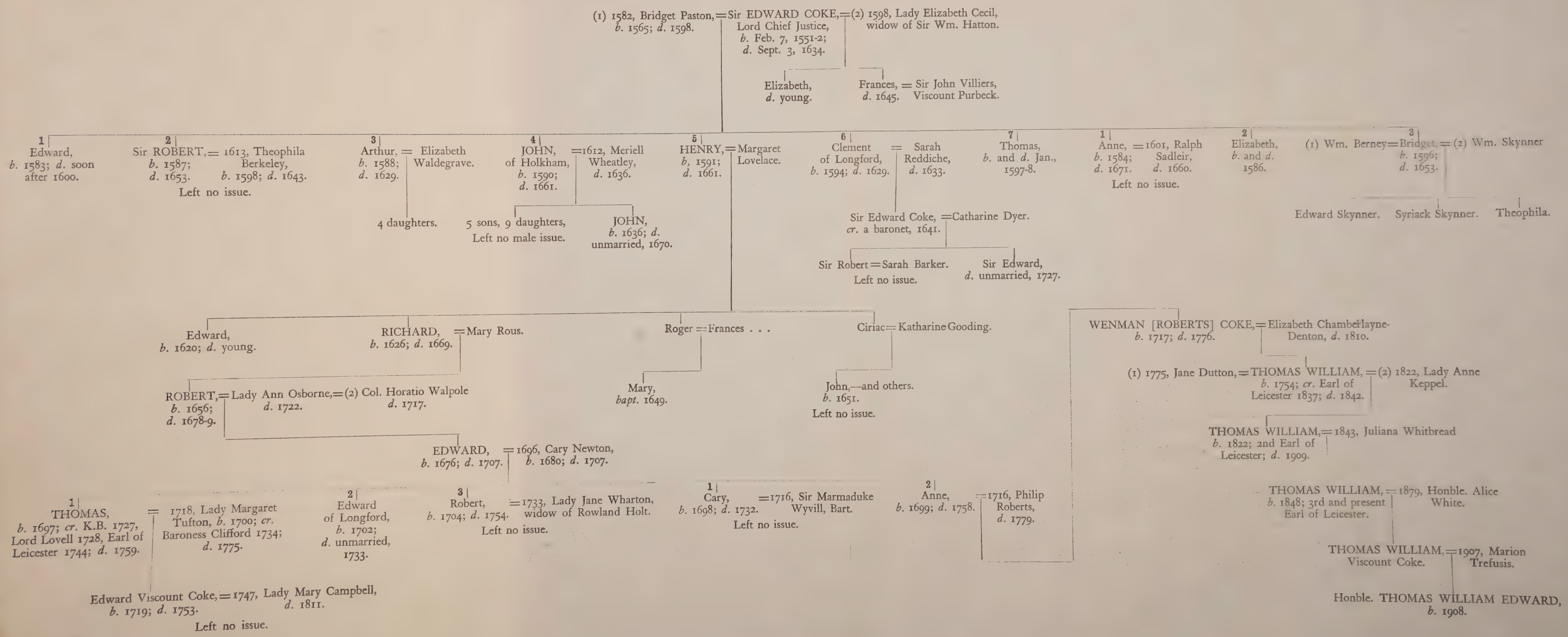
BILLING AND SONS, LTD., GUILDFORD AND ESHER

CHIEF JUSTICE COKE AND HIS DESCENDANTS


(1) 1582, Bridget Paston, b. 1565; d. 1598.
=Sir EDWARD COKE, Lord Chief Justice, b. Feb. 7, 1551-2; d. Sept. 3, 1634.
=(2) 1598, Lady Elizabeth Cecil, widow of Sir Wm. Hatton.
Elizabeth, d. young.
Frances, d. 1645. = Sir John Villiers, Viscount Purbeck.
1 Edward, b. 1583; d. soon after 1600.
2 Sir ROBERT, b. 1587; d. 1653. = 1613, Theophila Berkeley, b. 1598; d. 1643. Left no issue.
3 Arthur, b. 1588; d. 1629. = Elizabeth Waldegrave.
4 daughters.
4 JOHN, of Holkham, b. 1590; d. 1661. =1612, Meriell Wheatley, d. 1636.
5 sons, 9 daughters, Left no male issue.
JOHN, b. 1636; d. unmarried, 1670.
5 HENRY, b, 1591; d. 1661. =Margaret Lovelace.
6 Clement of Longford, b. 1594; d. 1629. = Sarah Reddiche, d. 1633.
Sir Edward Coke, cr. a baronet, 1641. =Catharine Dyer.
Sir Robert=Sarah Barker. Left no issue.
Sir Edward, d. unmarried, 1727.
7 Thomas, b. and d. Jan., 1597-8.
1 Anne, b. 1584; d. 1671. =1601, Ralph Sadleir, d. 1660. Left no issue.
2 Elizabeth, b. and d. 1586.
(1) Wm. Berney=3 Bridget, b. 1596; d. 1653. =(2) Wm. Skynner
Edward Skynner.
Syriack Skynner.
Theophila.
Edward, b. 1620; d. young.
RICHARD, b. 1626; d. 1669. =Mary Rous.
Roger =Frances . . .
Mary, bapt. 1649.
Ciriac=Katharine Gooding.
John,—and others. b. 1651. Left no issue.
ROBERT, b. 1656; d. 1678-9. =Lady Ann Osborne, d. 1722. =(2) Col. Horatio Walpole d. 1717.
EDWARD, b. 1676; d. 1707. =1696, Cary Newton, b. 1680; d. 1707.
1 THOMAS, b. 1697; cr. K.B. 1727, Lord Lovell 1728, Earl of Leicester 1744; d. 1759. = 1718, Lady Margaret Tufton, b. 1700; cr. Baroness Clifford 1734; d. 1775.
Edward Viscount Coke, b. 1719; d. 1753. =1747, Lady Mary Campbell, d. 1811. Left no issue.
2 Edward of Longford, b. 1702; d. unmarried, 1733.
3 Robert, b. 1704; d. 1754. =1733, Lady Jane Wharton, widow of Rowland Holt. Left no issue.
1 Cary, b. 1698; d. 1732. =1716, Sir Marmaduke Wyvill, Bart. Left no issue.
2 Anne, b. 1699; d. 1758. =1716, Philip Roberts, d. 1779.
WENMAN [ROBERTS] COKE, b. 1717; d. 1776. =Elizabeth Chamberlayne-Denton, d. 1810.
(1) 1775, Jane Dutton, =THOMAS WILLIAM, b. 1754; cr. Earl of Leicester 1837; d. 1842. =(2) 1822, Lady Anne Keppel.
THOMAS WILLIAM, b. 1822; 2nd Earl of Leicester; d. 1909. =1843, Juliana Whitbread
THOMAS WILLIAM, b. 1848; 3rd and present Earl of Leicester. =1879, Honble. Alice White.
THOMAS WILLIAM, Viscount Coke. =1907, Marion Trefusis.
Honble. THOMAS WILLIAM EDWARD, b. 1908.